



Compilation Report of the Process, Findings and Recommendations from the False Creek North Post-Occupancy Evaluation

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Executive Summary

In January 2007, a graduate planning course and research program at the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia was initiated to conduct a post-occupancy evaluation (POE) of False Creek North (FCN), Vancouver, Canada a world-renowned mixed-use, high-density master-planned development in downtown Vancouver. The eighteen-month study was led by Dr Wendy Sarkissian and Mr Larry Beasley, both instructors in the graduate program. The three-term course and the research involved twenty-four students over a period of eighteen months.

This research was conducted to evaluate how well an example of high-density, mixed-use, family oriented housing is meeting the needs of its residents. It is commonly known that settlements all around the world are rapidly urbanizing, with an increasing number of individuals and families living in high-density housing, mixed among other uses.

This research addresses the planning approach to housing residents from a comprehensive perspective by looking beyond just the individual residential units and housing component of the development to the entire range of support services and amenities that make a community a 'home'. Eight key research topic areas were identified for exploration:

- Parks and Public Open Spaces
- Shops, Services and Community Amenities
- Mobility and Transportation
- Community Safety
- The Residential Building
- The Housing Unit
- Sense of Community
- Perceived Sustainability of the Neighbourhood

The following mixed-methods were employed to reinforce the credibility of the data and interpretation and to construct a more complete picture of the state of the neighbourhood:

- Mail-out survey questionnaire
- Community SpeakOut event: "Have YOUR Say!" day
- In-depth interviews
- World Café focus group discussion
- Photo-collage exercise with elementary students

The key findings show that residents reported high levels of satisfaction in nearly all topic areas; 96% of questionnaire respondents stated that they would recommend living in FCN. A wide range of factors influenced residents' decisions to move to False Creek North most notably being proximity to work, public and private amenities and "livable" urban lifestyle. Residents reported mixed ratings on the "sense of community" with clusters of the community - dog owners, strata members, parents and children - in particular feeling a relatively strong sense of community, and other residents reporting that there the sense of community was largely superficial and many did not have friends in the neighbourhood. Children were happy to have so many of their friends within walking distance. Most residents are overwhelmingly satisfied with local parks although residents reported wanting more relaxation amenities such as chairs, picnic tables and benches. Parents and children would also like to see more varied, creative and "adventurous" play spaces for children, particularly older children. The presence of dogs in public parks is a polarizing and emotional topic. Residents, including children, praise the walkability of the community which is possible because of the range of community amenities and commercial services near by, but two-thirds of residents reported walking beyond a 10 minute walk to meet their day to day needs and also using a car to access more affordable and a wider range of goods. Ninety percent of the sample reported owning at least one

car. The lack of enough daycare and school spaces is an ongoing frustration, concern and challenge to raising a family in FCN. The Roundhouse Community Centre is a well-loved community hub of FCN that provides valuable services to the community, although there are too few activities catering to some age ranges at the Roundhouse, especially seniors and youth. Concerns about community safety were not reported to be a major problem in FCN. Respondents generally felt very safe in both indoor and outdoor space in FCN, and only slightly less safe at night time. This was reported for participants regardless of gender, age or having a family or not. Social activities and neighbourliness confer the benefits of “eyes on the street” which is well recognized by the residents as being the foundation of the community’s security. Buildings received generally high, although also mixed ratings with a number of areas identified for improvement: visitor parking, number of elevators, insufficient and uncreative use of building space for storage space and generally underused indoor and outdoor amenities. Families rated their overall satisfaction with their building lower than residents without children. Unit satisfaction levels also varied widely, but respondents were generally satisfied with their overall unit. Elements of the unit that could be improved include: insufficient general in-suite storage space, insufficient specific storage spaces such as kitchen cabinets and drawers, linen closets and bedroom closets, insufficient and/or inflexible unit space, balcony/outdoor space, kitchens and additional bedrooms. Families with children are equally satisfied with the overall layout of their suite, but express dissatisfaction with the size of their unit and particular rooms, such as kitchens. Sustainability was considered as being important or very important to half of the interview participants with most participants preferring not to use air conditioning to cool their warm apartments and supporting increased energy efficiency of appliances and building systems.

Primary recommendations to the planning community:

- Articulate more strongly policy guidelines framing implementation of social infrastructure, such as schools, to ensure that sufficient facilities are available before the first families move in. Ensure that these facilities are available within growing neighbourhoods such as FCN as the number and concentration of families increase.
- Guide the allocation of space for daycare facilities with a realistic sense of demand and projected growth. Identify and address any loopholes that might weaken such a framework.
- Design more diverse public spaces catering to the specific recreation and play needs of older children, as well as to younger children, rather than simply treating children as a homogenous group with common play and recreation needs.
- Aggressively foster affordable housing schemes targeting middle and modest incomes to ensure a diverse socio-economic mix, an environment appropriate for families and a strong sense of community.
- Target the incorporation of more appropriate and affordable retail outlets from the early stages of the development to meet the needs of residents from a variety of socio-economic grounds. Focus on families, in particular.

The research findings and recommendations from the False Creek North post-occupancy evaluation are valuable in highlighting what is and what is not working well for the residents of the compact neighbourhood. It is our sincere hope that these findings will positively contribute to the satisfaction of residents in FCN and in other communities throughout British Columbia and abroad that aspire to be centrally located, high-density, pedestrian and family oriented mixed-use neighbourhoods.

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- Dr Stephanie Chang: Professor, School of Community and Regional Planning, UBC
- David Ellis: Resident of False Creek South and one of the original planners and designers of the site
- Dr John Friedmann: Professor Emeritus, School of Community and Regional Planning, UBC and resident of False Creek South
- P.C. David Krenz, Vancouver Police Blockwatch Co-ordinator
- Dr Betty McGill: Long-time resident of False Creek South, who also prepared a background briefing note for the summer course
- Pieter Rutgers: Director of Planning and Operations, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
- Dr Leonie Sandercock: Professor, School of Community and Regional Planning and resident of False Creek South
- Gregory Saville: CPTED planner and criminologist, AlterNation, Port Townsend, Washington Professor
- Jacqueline Vischer: POE specialist and Professor, University of Montréal

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- Terry Howe, Principal, King George Secondary School
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- Pieter Rutgers, Director of Planning and Operations, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

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The residents and business people of FCN who gave their time and insights into their experiences of living in FCN. We sincerely hope that the findings from this study will be used to inform and improve high-density development so that it reflects your needs and those of future generations.

Authorship of this Report

This report is the culmination of the collaborative efforts of twenty-four graduate planning students and two dedicated professors. This research program would not have achieved its degree of success without the insights and contribution of all of the following members:

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
Acknowledgements	iii
Authorship of this Report	iv
Table of Contents	v
CHAPTER I -INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Purpose of the Case Study	1
1.2 The Importance of a Well-Conducted Post-Occupancy Evaluation	2
1.3 False Creek North: The Case Study	2
1.4 The Course: “Understanding Vancouver’s Housing: An Adventure in Post-Occupancy Evaluation”	4
1.5 How Will the Findings from this Study be Used?	5
1.6 Organization of this Report	
CHAPTER II - SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	7
CHAPTER III - THE HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF FALSE CREEK NORTH	15
3.1 History of the Site	16
3.2 FCN in Vancouver’s Downtown Setting: Public spaces, transportation, attractions and shopping districts	22
3.3 The Social Environment: Demographic Profile of False Creek North	27
3.4 In Hindsight	31
3.5 Overview of City Policy as it Relates to False Creek North	32
CHAPTER IV - PROJECT DESIGN	37
4.1 Post-Occupancy Evaluation as the Basis of the Research Program and Design	37
4.1.1 Benefits of Post-Occupancy Evaluations	38
4.1.2 Characteristics of a Post-Occupancy Evaluation	38
4.2 The Research Design for the FCN POE	40
4.2.1 The Project Team	40
4.2.2 Planning the FCN POE: January-April 2007	41
4.2.3 Observing Behaviour in the FCN Public Realm: Summer, 2007	41
4.2.4 Implementing the Research Program: September-December, 2007	42
4.2.5 The Research Questions Used to Guide the Methodology	42
4.2.6 The Methodology Used to Develop the Core Story	44
Mail-out Survey Questionnaire	45
In-depth Interviews	45
Community event: “Have YOUR Say!” day	45
World Café Focus Group Discussion	46
‘Week with a Camera’ Photo-collage Exercise with Elementary Students	46
4.2.7 Other Methodologies Researched, but not Used in the Evaluation	47
Other Direct Questioning Methods	47
Solicited Diaries	48
Participatory Mapping	48
Creative Approaches with Children and Youth	49

Observation	50
Photo-Exposé	50
Workshops and Community Events	50
4.3 Limitations of this Research	50
CHAPTER V - METHODS & ANALYSIS	53
Method 1: Mail-out Questionnaire	54
Method 2: SpeakOut	85
Method 3: World Café	103
Method 4: Week with a Camera	109
Method 5: In-depth Interviews	121
CHAPTER VI - DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS	153
6.1 Findings and Discussion for Each Topic Area	153
Community statistics	153
General satisfaction	154
Sense of community	156
Parks and public open spaces	156
Movement and transportation	157
Shops, services and facilities	158
Safety	159
Satisfaction with the residential building	161
Satisfaction with the individual unit	162
Perception of the community's sustainability	164
6.2 Evaluation of select overarching research questions and FCN policies	165
6.2.1 Questions pertaining to the planning of the project	165
6.2.2 Questions pertaining to the lived experiences of FCN residents	166
6.2.3 Evaluation of the City's "High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines"	168
6.3 Concluding Words	174
CHAPTER VII - RECOMMENDATIONS	175
1.0 Primary Policy Recommendations	175
2.0 Secondary and Additional Recommendations	176
2.1 To the development community	176
2.2 To the civic sector	177
2.3 To the management bodies	179
3.0 Additional Recommendations	179
3.1 To the development community	179
3.2 To the civic sector	181
3.3 To the management bodies	182
4.0 Recommendations for Further Research and Continued Community Engagement	184
BIBLIOGRAPHY	185
APPENDICES	
Appendices for Questionnaire method	
A - Mail-out questionnaire	
B - Frequency of responses	
C - Cross tabulations from mail-out questionnaire responses	

Appendices for SpeakOut method

- A - Facilitator prompts per stall
- B - Participant directions per stall
- C - Poster advertising Have YOUR Say! Day
- D - Press release advertising Have YOUR Say! Day
- E - Volunteer prompts

Appendices for Week with a Camera method

- A - Camera kit for participants
- B - Certificate of appreciation for participants

Appendices for In-depth interview method

- A - Interview guide
- B - Consent form

LIST OF FIGURES

Chapter 1

Figure 1.1.1: Some descriptive statistics of the FCN site.

Chapter 3

Figure 3.1.1: 1898 Dailyworld Bird's-eye View Detail.

Figure 3.1.2: 1953 Aerial Photo of North False Creek

Figure 3.1.3: 1972 Freeway Proposal that roughly follows Pacific Boulevard.

Figure 3.1.4: Ownership changes in 1970 Land Deal.

Figure 3.3.1: Census Tract 9330059.02 population, percentage of each age category.

Figure 3.3.2: City of Vancouver population, percentage of each age category.

Figure 3.3.3: Census Metropolitan Area population, percentage of each age category.

Chapter 4

Figure 4.1.1: Types of post-occupancy evaluations classified by level of effort, and the process in conducting POEs.

Chapter 5

Figure 5.1.1: Age of respondents, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.2: Age of all residents, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.3: Previous areas of residence, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.4: Vehicle and bicycle ownership, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.5: "Why do you travel beyond a 10-minute walk?", mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.6: "How safe do you feel in the public spaces in the following times?", mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.7: Overall satisfaction with building features, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.8: Satisfaction with unit design features, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.9: Additional bedroom uses, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.10: Length of future residency in FCN, mail-out questionnaire

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 5

Questionnaire method

Table 5.1.1: Demographic profile comparison, mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.2: Type of tenure, mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.3: Public space serving most outdoor needs (by gender), mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.4: "What could be changed to better serve your recreational/ leisure needs?", mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.5: "Do You Travel Beyond a 10-Minute Walk to Meet Your Day-To-Day Needs?" (by age),

mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.6: “How safe do you feel in your building?” (by income), mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.7: “Does safety present a challenge to raising a family?”, mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.8: Satisfaction with unit design features (by unit type), mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.9: Unit design and layout satisfaction (by having children under the age of 12), mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.10: Unit design and layout satisfaction (by length of future residency), mail-out questionnaire

Table 5.1.11: Length of future residency (by having children under the age of 12), mail-out questionnaire

SpeakOut method

Table 5.2.1: The specific embodied activities used at the ‘Have Your Say! Day’ with their respective categories, SpeakOut.

Interview method

Table 5.5.1: Age distribution of interview participants

Table 5.5.2: Income distribution for interview participants

Table 5.5.3: Previous places of residences, in-depth interview

Table 5.5.4: Distribution of tenure, in-depth interview

Table 5.5.5: Duration of residency in FCN, in-depth interview

Table 5.5.6: Length of stay participants are expecting to remain in FCN, in-depth interview

Table 5.5.7: Distribution of unit types, in-depth interview

LIST OF MAPS

Map 3.1.1: Site Map of False Creek North

Map 3.2.1: City of Vancouver - VanMap. Note that the boundaries shown on the map are City of Vancouver Administrative and Service Areas which do not necessarily correspond with neighbourhoods.

Map 3.2.2: More specific neighbourhoods in the downtown Vancouver area.

Map 3.2.3: Downtown Vancouver Rapid Transit Connections.

Map 3.2.4: Downtown Vancouver Streetcar Connections, approved and potential.

Map 3.2.5: Important Retail Streets in downtown Vancouver.

Map 3.3.1: The FCN study area is delineated with the blue dashed line. The Census Tract 0059.02 is delineated with the red dashed line.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In January 2007, a graduate planning course and research program at the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, was initiated to conduct a post-occupancy evaluation (POE) of False Creek North (FCN), a world-renowned mixed-use, high-density master-planned development by Concord Pacific in downtown Vancouver on the north shore of False Creek. The eighteen-month study was led by Dr Wendy Sarkissian and Mr Larry Beasley, both instructors in the graduate program. The project was conducted over three terms of course and practical research work and involved twenty-four students over a period of eighteen months.¹ This report documents the process and findings of that research program.

1.1 Purpose of the Case Study

Cities often aspire to shape the sociological and urban design dimensions of new urban developments with a variety of social engineering policies and urban design guidelines. Achieving residential satisfaction in multifamily facilities is increasingly becoming important as the world is rapidly urbanizing and the negative consequences of excessive urban sprawl point to higher density housing as a possible solution.² Since the mid-1970s, Vancouver has been seen as a leader in these endeavours and, with rapid development, has seen policy come to fruition in fully built and occupied communities. The 67ha site in Vancouver's city centre, False Creek North, also known as Concord Pacific Place, or 'New Yaletown', is a textbook case where a community of 10 000+ people has come together over the last decade.

Seldom have post-occupancy evaluation of these community-building efforts been undertaken on such a scale and rarely are POEs undertaken in a multifaceted, comprehensive fashion. While anecdotal or journalistic "evidence" may suggest how these communities perform for their residents and other users, little analytical evidence is available to guide policy refinement or direction or to develop new policies for large-scale developments of this type.

The mission of the study is therefore to:

"Develop and implement an appropriately scaled program of post-occupancy evaluation using FCN as a case study. Our aim is to make a positive contribution to the planning of liveable, socially equitable and more sustainable communities that serve the diverse needs of the citizens of Vancouver."³

Given the international reputation of FCN, the findings in this report should interest planners and designers internationally. The findings of this report are of particular interest at this time, given the global trend towards rapid urbanization and the recognition that well designed, compact developments are a sustainable initiative that may contribute to reduction of the ecological impacts of built form.

¹ A core group of nine students saw this work through to the completion of the research.

² James, 2007.

³ Bateman, Bodner & Hofer, 2007.

1.2 The Importance of a Well-Conducted Post-Occupancy Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation provide the essential feedback on the soundness of planning policy and decisions and hopefully promote continuous improvement in building and neighbourhood design and construction. A POE is a way of providing feedback throughout a building's lifecycle from initial concept through to occupation. They can be considered as the "quality control in the building and design process"⁴ that seek "to identify major project successes and weaknesses."⁵ A post-occupancy evaluation is centrally concerned with the needs of users and how those users behave and respond in a place. They may be used to evaluate the safety, efficiency and satisfaction of the users and are often designed to assess not only what is not but also what is working well.⁶ POEs are not restricted to evaluating buildings only, but can also be applied to the public realm, accessibility, connectivity and issues of social or tenure mix and diversity. POEs can range in scale and scope to assess anything aspect of occupant satisfaction from the fine details of a specific site to general sentiments about a master-planned development. To be most effective, performance evaluation must occur throughout the lifecycle of the area or building being studied.⁷

A well designed and conducted POE will be informed by environmental psychology and, depending on the findings, may contribute to further understanding in this field. Providing data and information to inform decision-making about the built environment is the overarching goal of all good POEs. The evaluation of the built form and the spaces it informs are considered by many to be an essential step of any development. Yet POEs and Building Performance Evaluations (BPEs) are not essential components of practice. Evaluations can identify what is or isn't working for a user of a given space, as well as theorize about the systemic reasons why space works or doesn't. This process can save time, effort and resources if it successfully informs future practice. Cases where buildings and spaces have had to be demolished and re-designed because the space was not congruent with the users' needs are well known. By adopting POEs and BPEs as leading practice, planners and designers can gain in confidence that their decisions with respect to the built form are being favourably perceived by the users of those spaces. POEs also have a role to play in assessing the environmental performance and sustainability-related concerns raised by building design and functioning.

1.3 False Creek North: The Case Study

At the time of this study, over 10 570 residents lived in 5 450 households within the boundaries of FCN; 13% of the population was under the age of nineteen.⁸ From the conception of the development, the City of Vancouver committed to making the project an example by demonstrating that families and residents in social housing could have their needs met in high-rise downtown living, enjoy a rich variety of amenities and mix seamlessly with the residents in smaller households and market-rate housing while maintaining a high quality of life. Ambitious social policies directed specifically at families, residents in social housing and the necessary amenities were conceived to address these goals.

⁴ Bechtel, *cited in* Augustin & Cackowski, 2003.

⁵ Research-Design Connections LLC, 2003.

⁶ Sommer, 1983.

⁷ Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2006, p.8.

⁸ Statistics Canada, 2007.

Table 1.1.1: Some descriptive statistics of the FCN site.

Site area	67ha
Population	10 570 in 2006
Density	390 units per hectare in 2006
Built form	No building, except one, shall exceed 91 metres. The exception shall not exceed 110 metres.
Affordable housing	361 out of 1380 projected units have been built.
Dwelling mix	Tenure mix (ownership, rental, social housing and co-operative housing) and specific proportions of housing allocated to households with children.
Open Space	1.0 hectares per 1,000 residents, or 25% of the total site

False Creek North (FCN) has received awards of merit⁹ and international attention for its *Living First* focus.¹⁰ This emphasis on capitalizing on the competitive advantages of the urban lifestyle to a suburban lifestyle has caused FCN, and Vancouver more broadly, to be viewed as a trendsetter in master planning, policy, design and implementation of attractive, family-oriented, centrally located

⁹ 2004 Special Achievement Award for Planning for the “Living First” Strategy Downtown, International Downtown Association, Washington, D.C.; 2006 Award of Excellence for the “Living First” Strategy Downtown, Congress for the New Urbanism, Chicago.

¹⁰ The following information has been borrowed from Beasley, 2000.

“The underlying theme in the Living First strategy is to bring out the competitive advantages of the urban lifestyle in preference to a suburban lifestyle. In a major stroke of rezoning, some eight million square feet were converted from excess commercial (office) capacity to allow residential development, old rail yards along the waterfronts were earmarked for housing, and an aggressive planning effort commenced to make the housing future real. Vancouver’s “Living First” success, however, is not just the result of favouring housing and changing the zoning to allow it to happen. Nor is it just the result of a vibrant market. The secret lies in a comprehensive integrated strategy: pushing for housing intensity; insisting on housing diversity; structuring for coherent, identifiable, and supportive neighbourhoods; and fostering suitably domestic urban design and architecture.” The primary principles centre on limiting commuter access into the downtown and prioritizing walking, biking and transit options and spending in the downtown, extending the fabric, patterns and character of the existing city to the new developments at the waters edge, developing complete neighbourhood units at the pedestrian scale, insisting on a housing mix for different familial compositions and financial means, reflecting beauty and community identity as well as promoting social life in the public realm and insisting that amenity contributions be borne by the development. The Living First approach has also necessitated the examination of potential negative externalities such as noise, danger, invasion of privacy and insensitivity to the needs of children in creating high-density downtown living. Balancing an urban design aesthetic, one that welcomes residents and gives a feeling of domesticity, and urban functionality has also received focused attention by depending on the traditional relationships between the street, the sidewalk, and the building wall to solve many of the problems in making high densities work. Building facades are articulated with doors, porches, stoops, windows, terraces and vegetation. Design guidelines, enabled by the zoning, set the form which is of small floor plates out of which a tower sits upon a pedestrian scaled “podium”, many of which are comprised of now popular row housing.

housing in the City's downtown core. This emphasis not only a livable downtown, but one that is also child friendly¹¹ has added to its livability distinction and international interest.

Given this international recognition, the aim of the FCN POE case study was primarily to evaluate policies developed to guide the development pertaining to the creation of housing and community services and amenities and to determine how the residents felt about their neighbourhood.¹² One reason for conducting the POE study is to determine if this development truly can act as a valuable guide for future developments. Interests related to resident satisfaction with FCN not specifically outlined in the policies were articulated by the students, developers, community members and Wendy Sarkissian, who from her rich research experience, has an intuitive idea of what issues should be evaluated. The research interests (in the form of research questions) are outlined in Chapter IV.

Of equal importance to framing research questions is the emphasis on documenting occupants' experiences and measuring their levels of satisfaction. The Project Team is well aware of the biases they might have harboured when formulating research questions and methods. Although we acknowledge that it is impossible to be completely objective, the Project Team hopes that our consciousness and reflection on our biases has helped us avoid introducing biases that might put the study at risk. We believe that we have been successful in designing a study so that residents have been able to tell their story of living in FCN.

1.4 The Course: "Understanding Vancouver's Housing: An Adventure in Post-Occupancy Evaluation"

The three-term course was developed to educate planning students in the study, design and implementation of post-occupancy evaluations as they relate to resident satisfaction in master planned developments. Other professional development learning objectives included:

- Awareness of the factors influencing the development of high-rise housing and the public realm in FCN;
- Awareness of the policy contexts in which this development was planned, designed, developed, occupied and managed;
- Awareness of the social factors that influence resident satisfaction with and use of housing and associated environments;
- Awareness of the "user perspective" in housing evaluation: issues related to the suitability of housing and associated spaces for particular user behaviours;
- Awareness of the literature on POE and BPE, with particular emphasis on high-density and high-rise housing contexts and associated public and shared open spaces;
- Familiarity with and ability to select from relevant social research approaches to assessing environments in use;
- Learning to design specific instruments for assessing housing from a user's perspective;
- Experiencing positive teamwork approaches; and
- Working in a professional setting with funders, stakeholders and other members of the community.

¹¹ Groc, 2007.

¹² An early assessment of the project's resources led to the decision to limit the evaluation solely to FCN residents.

The first (Spring - January to April 2007) term, consisted primarily of learning about the theory, philosophy and processes of POEs and the specifics of the study site, formulating appropriate framing research questions and researching suitable methods. An implementation strategy was created to inform the data and information collection to occur in the Fall of 2007.¹³

The second (Summer - June) term was intended to expand the brief by incorporating experiential understanding of the public realm of FCN into the research areas and objectives outlined in the Spring term. Students produced recommendations and questions that were incorporated into analysis in the third term.

The final (Fall and Spring - September 2007 to May 2008) phase of the course involved conducting the POE, including data and information collection and analysis and write-up of the findings. This was completed via five student-designed and facilitated methods, detailed later in this report (Chapter IV). After all the data and information were analyzed, the Project Team made recommendations for the development community, the civic sector and civic and building management bodies (see Chapter VII).

This course and research program offered SCARP planning students a unique opportunity to work alongside professionals on a practice-oriented real-world project, the results from which are highly anticipated by the planning, city management and development communities.

1.5 How Will the Findings from this Study be used?

We hope that this report and the summary document, *Living in False Creek North: From the Residents' Perspective – Summary of Findings and Recommendations of the False Creek North Post-Occupancy Evaluation*, will provide valuable contributions to the field of planning in Vancouver and beyond. The sponsoring developers and the City of Vancouver have already expressed an intention to use these research findings in their practices. We are confident that this work will also have international applicability, as other communities search for solutions to high-density urban living.

1.6 Organization of this Report

This report aims to document the substantive findings of the FCN POE, as well as the research design and methodology employed. It has been written for urban development and planning practitioners and the academic community. **Chapter II** summarizes the key findings and lists the key recommendations to the planning community. Readers interested in a more comprehensive *discussion* of the key findings will find this material in **Chapter VI: Discussion of Findings**.

Chapter III: The History and Context of FCN, describes the history and policy behind FCN, the current physical and social characteristics of the community and expands on the reasons why this community is an ideal development for evaluation.

The team's recommendations to various decision makers (the development community, the civic sector and civic and building managers) and researchers are located in **Chapter VII**. For each decision-making authority, recommendations are organized into the eight themes used throughout the study: Parks and Public Open Spaces; Shops, Services and Amenities; Mobility and Transportation; Community Safety; the Residential Building; the Dwelling Unit; Sense of Community and Perceived Sustainability of the Neighbourhood.

¹³ See Bateman, Bodner & Hofer, 2007.

Readers interested in the research *design* and results from each of the *specific methods* will find this material in **Chapters IV: Project Design** and **V: Methods and Analysis**, respectively. **Chapter IV** situates POEs in the research and practice literature and outlines our approach to the study, including all the methods that were considered (but not necessarily employed).

Each section in **Chapter V** corresponds to one of the methods and outlines the setting, procedure, sampling strategy, participant profile and results of the data and/or information collected using that method. Each section is meant to read as a discrete chapter that independently contributes to the whole story of this post-occupancy evaluation of FCN. **Chapter VI discusses the findings** from the entire research program and offers some conclusions and **Chapter VII reports the recommendations** for various decision makers and researchers and highlights areas for future research and action.

CHAPTER II: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The following section highlights in bullet form the key findings for each of the topic areas studied: Sense of Community; Parks and Public Open Spaces; Mobility and Transportation; Shops, Services and Amenities; Community Safety; the Residential Building; the Dwelling Unit; and Perceived Sustainability of the Neighbourhood. For a more comprehensive analysis of the findings see Chapter VI - Discussion of Findings. All findings are also discussed in the respective methods found in Chapter V.

Community statistics

- At the time of this study, over 10 570 residents lived in 5 450 households within the boundaries of FCN; 13% of the population was under the age of nineteen.
- Census figures show that there is a much higher proportion of children 4 or younger. The ‘spike’ in the population is between 30-39year olds. The demographics of the area have levelled out somewhat since 2001.
- Fifty percent of residents speak English as a first language; the other fifty percent come from a range of backgrounds and cultures and speak many languages including: Chinese, Spanish, Persian and Serbian.
- Nearly forty percent of the households are renting.
- Home owners tended to occupy larger units.
- Questionnaire respondents were broadly representative of FCN residents.

General satisfaction findings

- Respondents with whom we *spoke* at the SpeakOut, the World Cafe, the interview or the children from the Week with a Camera exercise were all quite satisfied with their living situation and 96% of questionnaire respondents claimed that they would recommend living in FCN.
- A wide range of factors influenced residents’ decisions to move to False Creek North most notably being proximity to work, public and private amenities and “livable” urban lifestyle.
- In comparison to other high-density downtown communities in Vancouver, FCN is viewed by its residents as having “suburban”-like qualities not typically found in the inner city.
- FCN caters well to the needs and preferences of children; the children in the study were very positive towards social interaction, learning and satisfaction with the public spaces and built environment.

- Renters and owner-occupiers alike say they feel a connection to and an “ownership” of the community.
- While the daycare and school facilities are commended as being excellent, if one can get in, the lack of enough of these facilities is an ongoing frustration, concern and challenge to raising a family in FCN.
- Lack of sufficient space and programming for youth and problems experienced by many residents of affordability, not only of their units but also with local facilities and services also present challenges to residents.
- One-third have been at the same address for one to three years and slightly fewer for more than five years. About 20 percent have lived at their current dwelling for 3-5 years, while 17 percent indicated that they moved less than one year ago.
- About one-third of residents planned to stay in the area for 5 years; Families with children under the age of 12 were much more likely to move earlier than those without children.
- Tenure and location within the community were correlated with likelihood of moving; safety was not.

Sense of community findings

- How respondents rated FCN’s “sense of community” depends on personality and definition of the term.
- Community is evident in older buildings and co-operatives primarily.
- Dog-owners, strata councils and/or parents with young children are clusters within the community that reported a higher sense of community.
- Some residents would like to see more programmed community events and more public areas for community congregation and lingering; this is desired both at the community and building scale.

Parks and public open spaces findings

- Most residents are overwhelmingly satisfied with local parks.
- Parks, plazas and open space were frequented regularly by residents, particularly by families and those who are within “viewing” distance of the parks.
- Families and those who earned less were less likely to report that parks and outdoor space fulfilled most of their needs.

- When asked what residents would like to see changed in the public open spaces, "no changes" was the more frequent response, followed by more relaxation amenities.
- The presence of dogs in public parks is a polarizing and emotional topic.
- Overall, residents value the public art because of its symbolic value and ability to instil community.

Movement and transportation findings

- Residents, including children, praise the walkability of the community which is possible because of the range of community amenities and commercial services near by.
- Nearly two-thirds (61%) of respondents reported walking more than 10 minutes to meet day-to-day needs.
- Despite appreciating the community's walkability, residents did not give up owning their cars.
- Roughly two-thirds (65%) of households owned a bike, most of which (78%) stored them in a common bicycle storage room provided in the building.
- For those adults who worked outside of the unit, the most common regular mode of travel to work was the automobile.

Shops, services and facilities findings

- The shops, services and facilities in FCN meet the needs of some respondents, but not a majority.
- The primary outstanding needs are for a greater diversity of shops and services that are affordable and reflect the range of incomes in the neighbourhood. The greatest retail need identified in the community is a mid-sized grocery store.
- The Roundhouse Community Centre is a well-loved community hub of FCN that provides valuable services to the community, although there are too few activities catering to some age ranges at the Roundhouse, especially seniors and youth.
- A relatively low percentage of families reported that access to public amenities (16%) and local facilities and services (15%) presented a challenge to raising a family in FCN. However, "School/daycare" was perceived as a challenge by more than half (53%) of respondents with children, and received a number of negative comments.
- Some residents noted that nearby nightclubs in Yaletown are considered noisy, disruptive and not appropriate for a residential neighbourhood.

Safety findings

- Concerns about community safety were not reported to be a major problem in FCN. Respondents generally felt very safe in both indoor and outdoor space in FCN, and only slightly less safe at nighttime.
- Specific locations were noted as feeling somewhat unsafe.
- Social activities and neighbourliness confer the benefits of “eyes on the street” which is well recognized by the residents as being the foundation of the community’s security.
- There were a number of comments regarding the perceived threats posed from homeless people and drug users, lighting in parks and along the seawall at nighttime, dogs and traffic along Pacific Boulevard.
- A statistically significant correlation exists between income and perceptions of safety in the respondents’ *buildings*.
- Although FOBs are greatly appreciated for the security that they afford, most residents are acutely aware of the trade-offs to “sense of community” within their building.
- Pacific Boulevard is perceived by many as being unsafe, noisy, unattractive and a source of pollution.

Satisfaction with the residential building

- Building amenities, design of the building itself, building grounds, maintenance and friendliness of building management are important to many residents, many of whom rate these highly.
- The main areas that could benefit from more attention in building design and management are visitor parking, number of elevators, insufficient and uncreative use of building space for storage space and generally underused indoor and outdoor amenities.
- Families rated their overall satisfaction with their building lower than residents without children.
- Amenities were given the highest satisfaction rating in comparison to other building attributes.
- Residents need semi-private spaces, interior and exterior, with which they can interact—rooms that can be used for a variety of purposes, and outside areas that can be used for impromptu recreation, picnicking, gardening, and other activities, much like a backyard would be used.
- Many residents would like to see more efforts in their building to bring people together.

- Residents report general satisfaction with resident parking in the market-rate buildings.
- The provision and management of visitor parking is a major point of contention for many residents.
- Residents in multi-family housing appreciate storage.
- Residents in more than twenty-story towers with only two elevators are generally very dissatisfied with their provisions.

Satisfaction with the individual unit

- Unit satisfaction levels varied widely, but respondents were generally satisfied with their overall unit.
- Elements of the unit that could be improved include: insufficient general in-suite storage space, insufficient specific storage spaces such as kitchen cabinets and drawers, linen closets and bedroom closets, insufficient and/or inflexible unit space, balcony/outdoor space, kitchens and additional bedrooms.
- Families with children are equally satisfied with the overall layout of their suite, but express dissatisfaction with the size of their unit and particular rooms, such as kitchens.
- Children that commented on their unit were positive and liked the views from or location of their home.
- A preference for an open-plan, as opposed to a separated kitchen appears to be a matter of personal taste.
- Enclosed balconies were reported as being used for a range of purposes, primarily typical balcony uses.
- Open balconies are appreciated but enclosed balconies receive mixed views.
- A majority of residents use their in-suite space primarily for storage.
- Second bedroom usage indicated a possible under-utilization of maximum occupancy within units.
- Noise from within the unit or within building was largely not a problem although noise, particularly traffic noise, from outside was an issue.
- Few residents report visual privacy as an issue.
- Heat from the sun can be unbearable in some of the units, particularly for those in the higher floors and south-facing units.
- In general, having a unit that lends itself well to renovations is a source of satisfaction for homeowners.

Perceptions of the community's sustainability¹

- Sustainability was considered as being important or very important to half of the interview participants.
- Most of the children in the study have an awareness of the natural environment and raised concerns on the water pollution and litter in the neighbourhood.
- Most participants support increased energy efficiency of appliances and building systems.
- Many residents don't want to use energy intensive air conditioning to cool their units.
- Some energy efficient systems are not effective such as energy efficient heating systems and water saving toilets.
- Most residents recycle, although it has been noted that there is some tension in this regard with those in the building who do not understand how to separate materials.
- A mix of stores that better reflects the range of incomes and needs in the community would add to the social and economic sustainability of FCN.
- Many residents are also concerned that FCN may be approaching the limits to how many people it can accommodate and that more people will infringe on the qualities that make FCN what it is – a safe and liveable community.

Primary Policy Recommendations for the Planning Community

- Articulate more strongly policy guidelines framing implementation of social infrastructure, such as schools, to ensure that sufficient facilities are available before the first families move in. Ensure that these facilities are available within growing neighbourhoods such as FCN as the number and concentration of families increase.
- Guide the allocation of space for daycare facilities with a realistic sense of demand and projected growth. Identify and address any loopholes that might weaken such a framework.
- Design more diverse public spaces catering to the specific recreation and play needs of older children, as well as to younger children, rather than simply treating children as a homogenous group with common play and recreation needs.
- Aggressively foster affordable housing schemes targeting middle and modest incomes to ensure a diverse socio-economic mix, an environment appropriate for families and a strong sense of community.

¹ The following findings are from the interview method, as sustainability was not discussed explicitly in the other methods, unless otherwise stated.

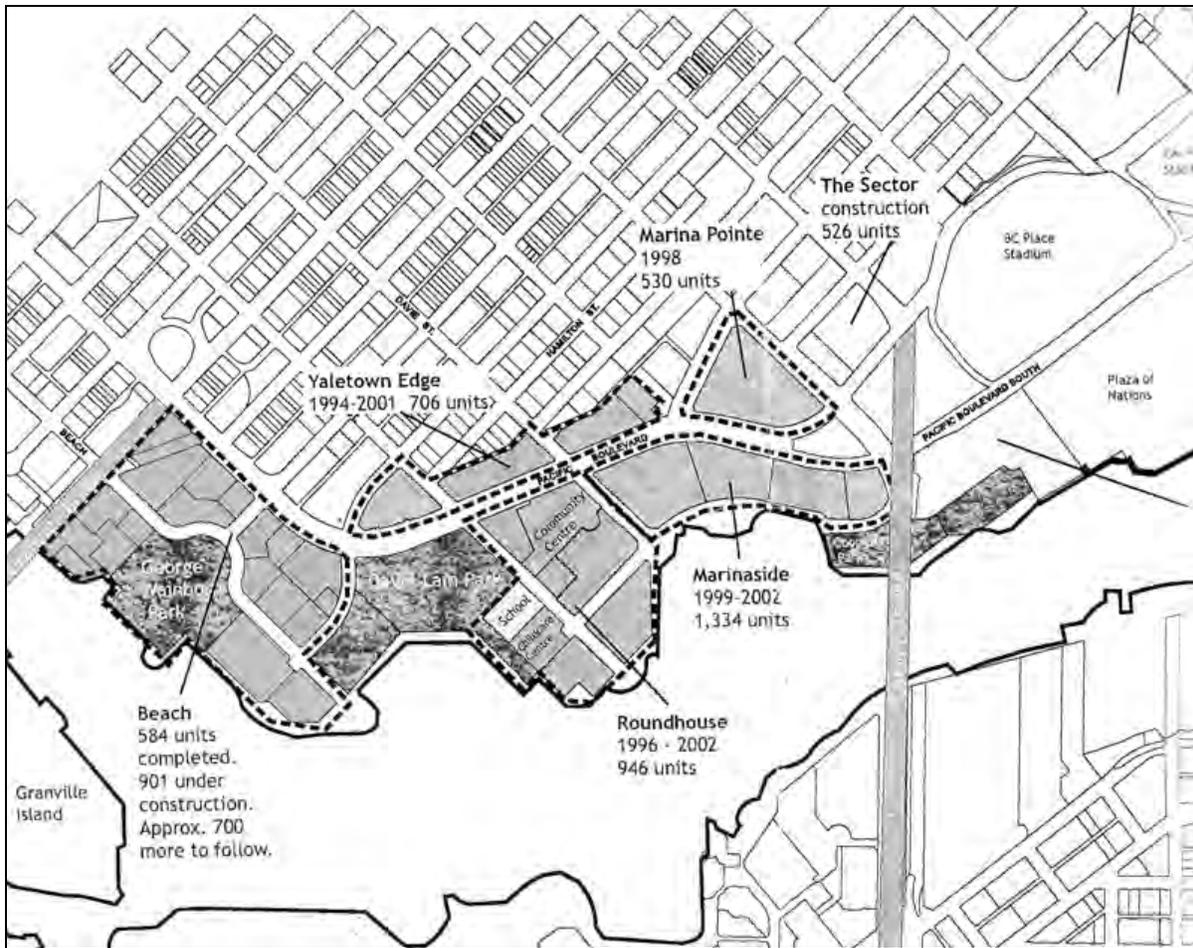
- Target the incorporation of more appropriate and affordable retail outlets from the early stages of the development to meet the needs of residents from a variety of socio-economic grounds. Focus on families, in particular.

CHAPTER III: THE HISTORY AND CONTEXT OF FALSE CREEK NORTH

False Creek North provides for a valuable case study of high-density, high-rise, downtown living because of the recognized seminal status the master planned development has received in guiding following developments in both Vancouver's context and beyond. The site demonstrates the potential redevelopment opportunities of under utilized industrial land, as well as a highly orchestrated and comprehensive urban design and city planning effort. The history and context of the physical and social environments are described below. The policies that guided the development are explained in the following sections.

From the conception of the development, the City of Vancouver committed to making the project an example by demonstrating that families and residents in social housing could have their needs met in high-rise downtown living, enjoy a rich variety of amenities and mix seamlessly with the residents in smaller households and market-rate housing while maintaining a high quality of life. Ambitious social policies, directed specifically at families, residents in social housing and the necessary amenities were conceived to address these goals. These were outlined in the *CityPlan*, Central Area Plan, "High-Density Housing Guidelines for Families with Children", "Plaza Design Guidelines", False Creek North Official Development Plan and False Creek Policy Broadsheets and are discussed in more detail below. The lessons learned from planning FCN contributed heavily to the "cooperative planning model", comprising a set of established and emerging leading practices that continue to inform Vancouver's master planned developments.¹

¹ Beasley, 2008, pers. comm.



Map 3.1.1: Site Map of False Creek North (Data on map valid for 2004).²

3.1 History of the Site

The FCN site has experienced a rich and changing history; this section gives a brief account of how the land use in FCN and priorities for the site have evolved from pre incorporation to present day.³

Pre Incorporation

The shores of the False Creek basin were used as grounds for food gathering of fish, crab, shellfish, and other species, primarily by residents of the S'nuaq village at what is now referred to as Kits Point. Over the years, the shores and flats of North False Creek would be massively changed by the development of a rail terminus that fuelled land deals and speculation. The Canadian Pacific Railway essentially gave birth to the city by shifting the location of their terminus to Vancouver in exchange for large swaths of land around it, including the False Creek shore lands.

1887: The Infancy of Vancouver

The Roundhouse is one of the only remaining structures from the era of Vancouver's incorporation, which was based on land deals with the Canadian Pacific Railway in the 1880s. Constructed in 1886 -

² City of Vancouver, 2004.

³ This section largely contains excerpts from Hurley, 2007.

1888, just after the city's incorporation and destructive fire, the CPR Roundhouse functioned as the industrial terminus maintenance shops to the transcontinental railway and its rail yards.



Figure 3.1.1: 1898 Dailyworld Bird's-eye View Detail.⁴

1890s-40s: Height of Industrial Steam Rail

For the next half-century, rail industry and operations expanded, as did its importance to the region. The rail connection and waters of False Creek acted as catalysts for industrial development, and False Creek boomed for decades with industrial activity. Just to the northeast of the Roundhouse, the CPR shipped in and housed workers in from Yale, B.C. to work in the rail yards and repair shops. The industrial district that grew around them on Mainland and Hamilton Streets came to their community's namesake, Yaletown. Along with the burgeoning industry came associated issues and narratives surrounding labour struggles, rises and busts in commerce, environmental degradation, and heavy pollution. The recessions, Great War, Depression, and Second World War all had an effect on the fortunes and follies of Vancouver as a 'Terminal City', and the Roundhouse was the last stop for all the engines that drove it.

⁴ Hayes, 2005.



Figure 3.1.2: 1953 Aerial Photo of North False Creek.⁵

1950s-80s: Decline of Steam Rail and Change in Industrial False Creek

With the decline of steam engines for rail use and the increase in trucking for goods movement in the later half of the century, the Railyards slowly came into a state of disuse. In the same period during the era, the toll of pollution in False Creek was so intense that it was causing industrial land, not to mention nearby residential areas, enough issues that there were calls to have it filled in. With the rise of the automobile, there were proposals for freeways and connector roads to run through the neighbourhood. The most extensive freeway proposal caused a community uprising in 1968-72. A final proposal showed a downtown freeway bypass that would go through the site roughly along the right of way of Pacific Boulevard. However, a marked change in policy towards more rapid transit solutions, due to public pressure, ended the plan.



Figure 3.1.3: 1972 Freeway Proposal that roughly follows Pacific Boulevard.⁶



Figure 3.1.4: Ownership changes in 1970 Land Deal.⁷

⁵ Hayes, 2005.

⁶ Hayes, 2005.

⁷ Hayes, 2005.

In the late seventies a major land deal and swap ushered in changes to the district as the CPR transferred land to the province, which began to envision the False Creek lands as having potential for developing residential communities on the edge of the downtown. Industrial buildings and structures were razed to make way for developments in False Creek, except for Granville Island, where the designers successfully experimented with the adaptable value of original structures. However, for the other developments, there was no such retention and adaptation in the planning and design processes. Industrial properties on the north side of False Creek were cleared. This would have included the Roundhouse if it had not been for public outrage and protests that argued the building's cultural and historical significance to the city. The demolition was cancelled, but only after the eastern half of the building came down; the rest sat derelict and alone at the end of Davie Street for decades.

The land clearing on the north side of False Creek was undertaken full scale to accommodate the coming worlds fair, which would coincide with the city's centenary. The Exposition focused on transportation past, present and future. The exposition succeeded in placing Vancouver on the world's stage, reviving the city's economy and generating international interest and investment in local real estate.

1990s: Concord Pacific Redevelopment and the Heart of Yaletown

The sale of the site to Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka Shing shortly after Expo 86 continued to spark international investment. Although there was some public criticism about the sale of prized lands at a low price of \$339 M,⁸ the City ensured that the development would benefit the entire City by including public amenities such as the extension of the sea wall on the FCN lands, public park space for downtown living, public art and the building of out-of-school care facilities, provision of land for social housing and the creation of the community centre in the historical Roundhouse, which opened in 1997.

Concord Pacific was created to develop FCN, making rapid progress by coming to agreement with the City over the development of the land through collaborative and cooperative planning processes. This collaboration extended beyond the City and the developers to include the general public, who were recognized as contributing to a strong base of community participation. Embracing a philosophy that the public should be involved in an "ongoing, open, inclusive planning process to consider both the megaproject and the surrounding areas"⁹ and that "wealth created by public decision should be shared with the public,"¹⁰ the City of Vancouver adopted an extensive public consultation program in the 1990s which led to the creation of *CityPlan*. This Plan provides a framework for deciding City programs, priorities, and actions until 2015. Over 20 000 people actively participated in the process by making submissions and attending events.¹¹ This public process was acknowledged by a number of organizations as being innovative and inclusive which led to the process receiving a number of awards.¹²

⁸ Punter, 2003, chapter 6.

⁹ Punter, 2003, p. 196-197.

¹⁰ Beasley, 2007.

¹¹ *CityPlan* and Community Visions webpage, City of Vancouver.

<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/cityplan/Visions/index.htm> (Last accessed November 12, 2008)

¹² 1993 Special Achievement Award for CityPlan Public Process, International Downtown Association; 1994 Contributions to Local Democracy Award, CityPlan Resource Centre, Social Planning & Research Council of BC; 1994 Georgie Silver Award, Excellence in Government Cooperation for Concord Pacific Place, Canadian Home Builders Association of BC; 1995 National Honour Award for Citizen Participation, CityPlan Public Process, Canadian Institute of Planners; 1995 Award of Excellence, CityPlan Public Process, Planning Institute of BC.

Shortly before the conception of *CityPlan*, the Central Area Plan was being formulated in consultation with residents and concurrent to and nested within this was the consultation for FCN. The public were invited to participate in the planning for FCN at all stages from the highly conceptual stages of the CAP and the ODP to the more specific details discussed at the rezoning and development permit stage. Special efforts were made to allow people well beyond the site to contribute to the guiding policies including special interest groups and children by employing a children's advocate. The public process resulted in clearly articulated visions for the area that continue to guide the development today.¹³ Because of the cooperative and collaborative working relationships among the City, developers and the public, -- an approach that now informs all major developments in Vancouver -- the plan for FCN was approved with little controversy.¹⁴

*High density living in Vancouver*¹⁵

To understand the current importance of FCN, one has to understand Vancouver's history of high-density downtown communities. Despite the popularity of high-rise living in downtown Vancouver today, high-rise living is a relatively new concept to Vancouver, gaining its foothold through the development of another of Vancouver's well-known communities: the West End. Between the early 1960s and 1970s, Vancouver's downtown peninsula experienced a rapid rate of change and the West End community transformed from a neighbourhood comprised primarily of substandard single-family housing to modernist high-rises within the span of a decade. The transformation undoubtedly affected many residents' lives, some negatively, as they were forced to leave their homes. However, there were wider benefits for the Vancouver community. The redevelopment of the West End created the context for the conception of the slim point tower, a building typology which strongly influenced the built form of FCN.

As the West End underwent its transformation from single- to multi-family residences, the block pattern of the neighbourhood did not change. Unlike in many other municipalities, which encouraged large slab high-rises on amalgamated plots or superblocks, Vancouver developers were forced to design high-density buildings to fit on small suburban blocks. This constraint, combined with policies guiding setbacks and relatively low Floor Space Ratios (FSR), gave rise to new design solutions to accommodating elevators and the requisite dual fire stairways, while maximizing livable space. The 'Vancouver Special' high-rise, as it is sometimes referred to, has the elevator and scissor fire exit stairwells adjacent to (but separate from) each other at its core, around which are the units that all face outward thus maximizing views. The human-scaled 'podium' from the tower-podium building typology was an added component that allowed this typology to become a favoured building type for the FCN development. The tower podium consisting of a base of townhouses situated below a slim point tower; it allows for high-rise density to be accommodated without compromising the human-scaled streetscape. This is achieved by a tower-and-podium building typology. In the three or four story podium, the ground-level floor is articulated with store frontages and townhouse front doors. The high-rise building rises above the podium but is set back from the property line, thus potentially mitigating the sense of great massing.

But despite the new form of the slim point tower and the enjoyment of the high-rise West End apartment buildings by many of the young single tenants, between the early 70s until the mid 80s no more high-rise buildings were built in Vancouver. For one reason, the demand for housing was not as strong as previously, with many from the Baby Boomer generation settling down and establishing

¹³ Beasley, 2008, pers. comm.

¹⁴ Punter 2003, p. 200

¹⁵ This section is informed by an interview with Gordon Price, April 10, 2008.

families. But more importantly, there was a view that Vancouverites were displeased with the aging 'concrete jungle' aesthetics of the West End and did not want to see that form of development in their respective neighbourhoods. Many sites in the West End and elsewhere were "down-zoned" as a result to discourage high-density development.

The mid-80s and well into the 90s, when FCN was being first planned and then developed, however, saw a rise in homeowners, and need for housing, as the children of the first Baby Boomers began to move out and establish their own households and families. The invention of the condominium ownership structure spurred a new interest in high-rise living and the under-utilized industrial site of FCN was considered a suitable location for high-density development as it did not infringe on existing neighbourhoods. As mentioned above, the community was also widely consulted about their vision for the site and surrounding areas. This engagement also contributed to its acceptance because, at least in the view of those who participated, it became a neighbourhood designed to meet the needs of the community.

This process and vision for the area marked the beginning of the rapid pace of residential development that characterizes Vancouver's downtown development today. Following commencement of the project, standards were adopted for FCN (informed by the West End and South False Creek planning experiences), making it easier for other downtown master planned community developments to be assessed and approved.

FCN and the 'Vancouver Style' it typifies are shaped by precedent communities such as the West End, architectural approaches to accommodate density in slim point and podium towers, building materials to support high-rise construction and the opportunity to build on uninhabited land at the waters edge. A demand for housing by young professionals and families and cultural acceptance of high-rise living has contributed to the popularity of FCN.

3.2 FCN in Vancouver’s Downtown Setting: Public spaces, transportation, attractions and shopping districts¹⁶



Map 3.2.1: City of Vancouver - VanMap. Note that the boundaries shown on the map are City of Vancouver Administrative and Service Areas which do not necessarily correspond with neighbourhoods.

¹⁶ This section largely contains excerpts from Hurley, 2007.

Central Area Population Areas



Map 3.2.2: More specific neighbourhoods in the downtown Vancouver area.¹⁷

Transportation

Both Pacific Boulevard and Davie Street are considered to be important circulation streets and are particularly active where they meet each other, when not closed off due to construction. Pacific Boulevard is expected to undergo a redevelopment as a multiway boulevard over the next phase of development with multiple green and treed medians to break up pedestrian crossings, and enormity of the arterial street. Many of the streets in the vicinity of the plaza have parallel parking stalls along them. There are few public access parking lots in this sector of the city, save for that in Bill Curtis Plaza, and one under Roundhouse Mews.

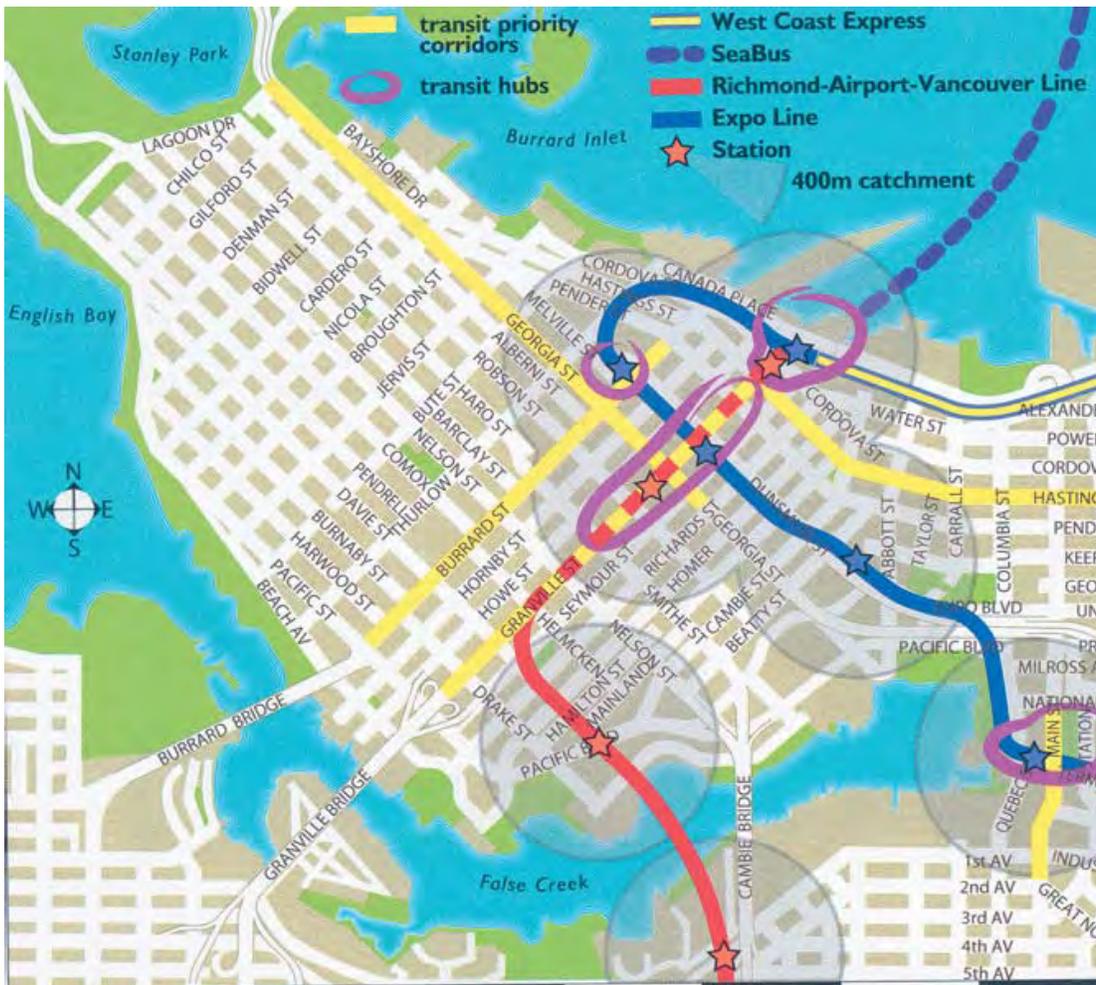
Currently there are few direct public transit connections to FCN. As it stands the strongest transit connection is from busses on Granville and Seymour Streets. There is a direct link with the C23 Southside Community Shuttle, but its service is relatively infrequent and has low capacity. There are expected to be some major developments in terms of transit connections over the next decade. Of particular impact will be the Yaletown-Roundhouse Canada Line Subway Station. Its entrance will be located just 150m from the Roundhouse Plaza at Mainland and Davie Streets in Bill Curtis Plaza. It will connect the site to South Vancouver and Richmond, as well as other serviced areas through transfers.

¹⁷ City of Vancouver, Planning Department, 2003. Central Area Estimated Growth to 2031 Information Sheet.

Another transit connection might be an extended Pacific Boulevard streetcar line, connecting the Roundhouse as a terminus stop to other attractions and neighbourhoods around False Creek. As part of the Downtown Transportation Plan council approved the project in 2005, but implementation is still being worked out.¹⁸

There are a few ways for cyclists to reach the site, but the main is via the Seaside Bike Route running along the Seawall around False Creek. Pacific Boulevard also has bike lanes for more confident and commuting riders. Besides these, the local streets around the Roundhouse and an upcoming Helmcken Greenway can be considered to be bike friendly.

There is a False Creek ferry dock at the end of Davie Street, 100m from the Roundhouse plaza.



Map 3.2.3: Downtown Vancouver Rapid Transit Connections.¹⁹

¹⁸ City of Vancouver, 2005.

¹⁹ City of Vancouver, 2005.



Map 3.2.4: Downtown Vancouver Streetcar Connections, approved and potential.²⁰

Nearby Attractions and Shopping Districts

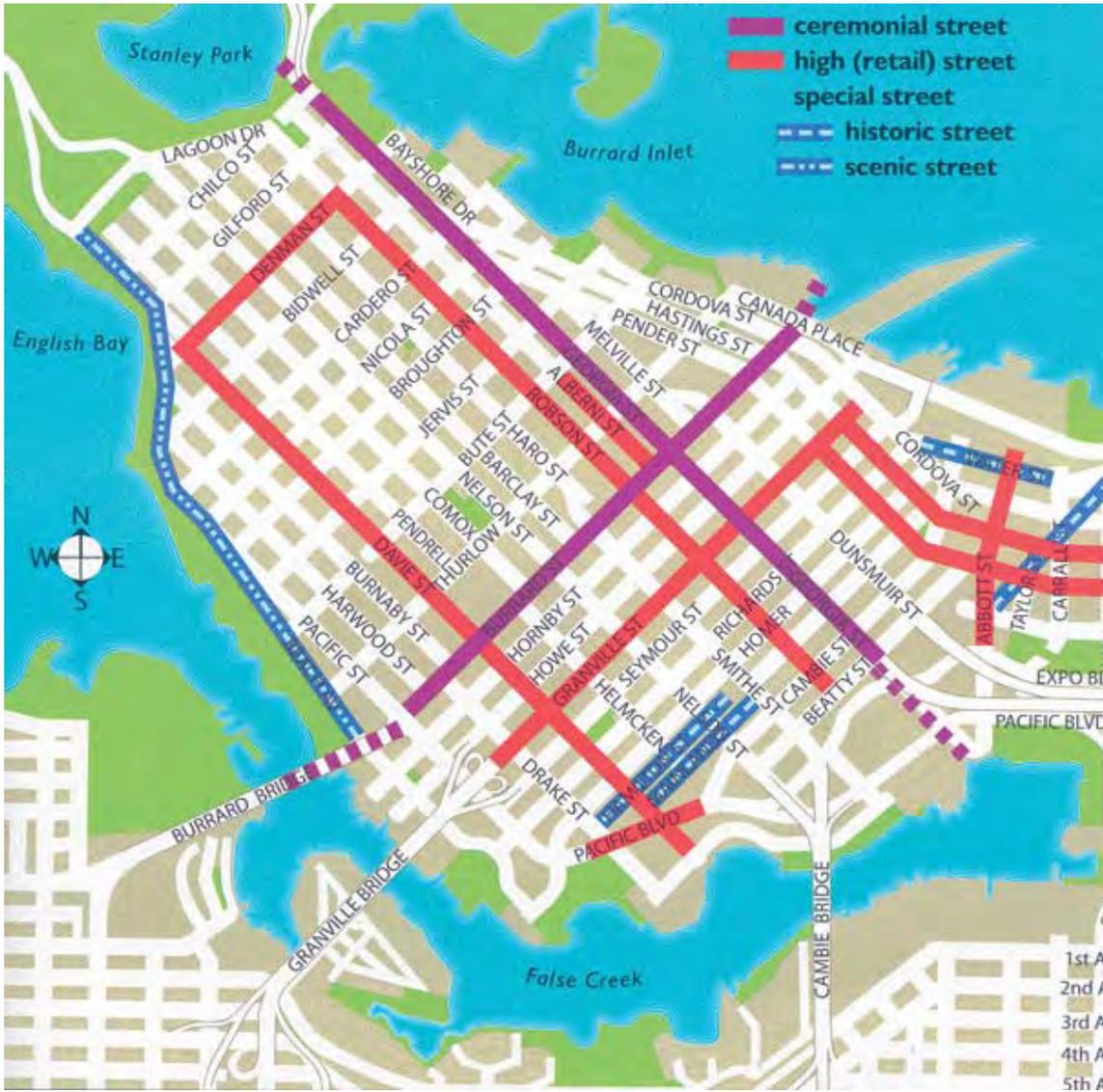
The southeast end of the Davie retail high street contains the Urban Fare grocery store, and other cafes shops and restaurants. Affordable dining and takeout food seems to be more available farther up Davie Street towards Granville, while the retail and food around the Roundhouse is of a much higher price scale.

Intersecting Davie Street on the north side of the Roundhouse with a 36.5 m crossing is Pacific Boulevard. The wide street supports a section of locally oriented businesses with little pedestrian traffic compared to the vast amount of vehicles that use it. These services include: a liquor store, video rentals, and aestheticians. There are currently active plans to rework and pedestrianize and green this arterial road.

²⁰ City of Vancouver, 2005.

The next two intersecting streets up Davie about 150m from the Roundhouse plaza, **Mainland and Hamilton**, have historic brick warehouses and loading docks that have been revamped into a up-end, restaurant, fashion retail cluster that is definitive as Yaletown, and is quite active year round.

About 600m up the hill but still significant to activity reaching the Roundhouse is the active Granville Mall.



Map 3.2.5: Important Retail Streets in downtown Vancouver.²¹

Community Amenities Context²²

False Creek is a regional destination for residents and tourists, and is described in the City's 1988 False Creek policy broadsheets as "a great amenity of the City". A number of the amenities within the FCN boundaries are discussed below.

²¹ City of Vancouver, 2005.

²² The following descriptions of the parks and community centre are excerpts from Brownell, 2006.

The **Seawall** is boasted as Stanley Park's most famous feature²³ and is described as "a regional public amenity" in the City's policy broadsheets. The 8.8 km long approximately 10 m wide separated bike and pedestrian route is analogous to a linear park. The Seawall also plays a role in the City policy that some parks on False Creek should be easily accessible from the surrounding areas.

The 2.5 hectare **George Wainborn Park** includes large open lawn areas, a dramatic water fountain with a quieter pool to one side where children (and dogs) can play, and a small playground area with a play structure and swings.

The 4.3 hectare **David Lam Park** includes two basketball courts, two tennis courts, a soccer field, a large open lawn area, and playground area with play structure and swings.

The 0.9 hectare **Roundhouse Park** is officially considered a park although it is not a true green space.²⁴ This facility is the site and surrounding landscaping of the Roundhouse Community Centre, featuring landscaping; the original railway turntable is incorporated into the bridge design.

The 1.7 hectare **Cooper's Park** includes a large open lawn area, skateboard park, basketball court, and playground with play structure (the latter three features being located under the Cambie Bridge). Cooper's Park is the only official off-leash dog park within the boundaries of FCN.

The **Roundhouse Community Centre** includes a performance centre, exhibition hall, and space for dance, pottery, woodworking, and theatre. The Centre also has a full size gymnasium for physical activities. A wide range of classes, workshops and programs are provided through the Centre for all age groups. There are also preschool, noon hour, after-school and day camp kids programs, as well as teen drop-ins and special events for youth.

The following childcare centres are located within FCN:

- Quayside Children's Centre
- Elsie Roy Elementary School
- Dorothy Lam Children's Centre
- Library Square Children's Centre is close to FCN

The Elsie Roy Elementary School is also located within FCN.

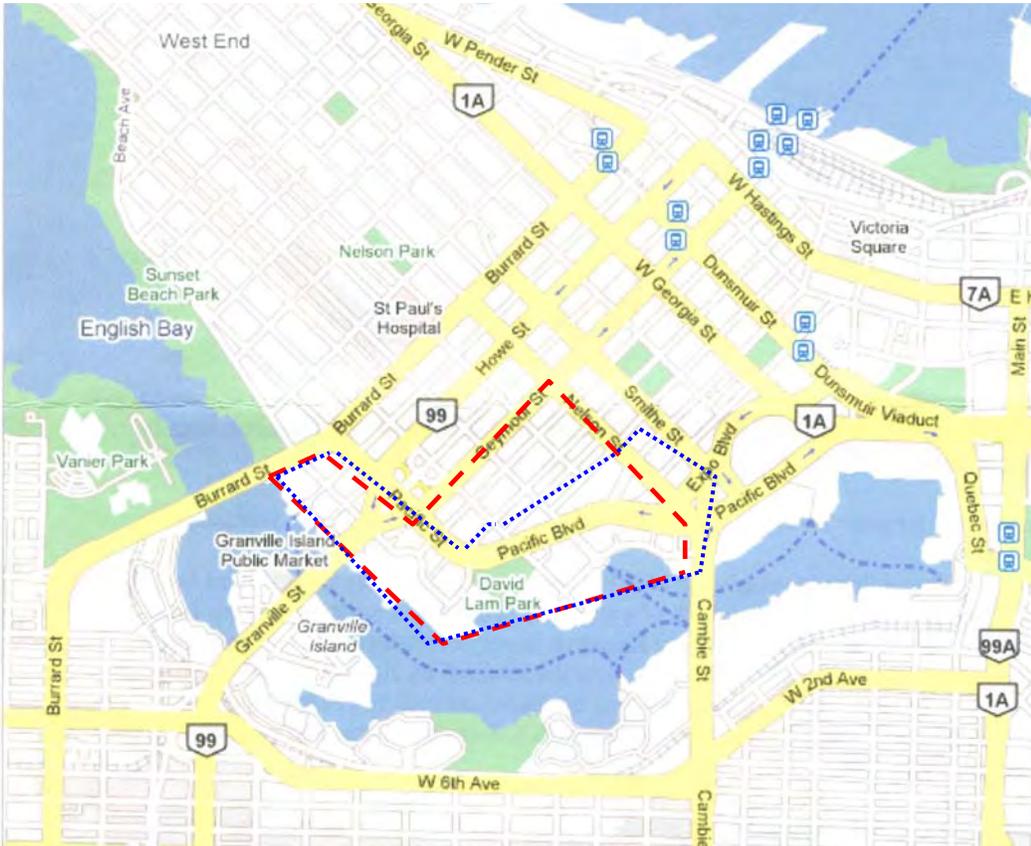
3.3 The Social Environment: Demographic Profile of False Creek North

False Creek North consists of five neighbourhoods situated along side Pacific Boulevard and the north shore of False Creek: the Roundhouse Neighbourhood, Yaletown Edge, Quayside, Beach Neighbourhood, and Beatty Mews. The site boundaries defining 'FCN' can vary depending on the source. The demographic profile used here relies on the geographic tract (defined by Statistics Canada), which most closely encompasses the study area. Census Tract 0059.03 is bounded by Burrard Street to the west, Pacific Boulevard and Homer Street to the north, and Nelson Street and the Cambie Bridge to the east, with False Creek providing the natural boundary to the south. The map shows that the Census Tract 0059.02, while close, does not exactly match the boundaries of the

²³ Vancouver Parks Boards Parks and Gardens: Stanley Park webpage.
<http://city.vancouver.bc.ca/parks/parks/stanley/> (last accessed November 24, 2008).

²⁴ It is referred to as the Roundhouse Plaza in this document as that is how it is commonly known.

study area. Any interpretation of the Census data therefore must recognize this. Canada undertakes a census every five years; the following figures are based on the 2006 census.



Map 3.3.1: The FCN study area is delineated with the blue dashed line. The Census Tract 0059.02 is delineated with the red dashed line.

FCN is a rapidly growing and extremely dense neighbourhood, compared to the rest of the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) and the rest of British Columbia, and it has grown significantly since the previous census in 2001.²⁵ In 2006, the population density for FCN is approximately 18,857 people per sq kilometre and it has most certainly increased since then. FCN is almost 25 times denser than the rest of the Vancouver CMA which has a population density of only 736 persons per sq km. With a 2006 population of 10 570, FCN experienced a population growth rate of 47% between 2001 and 2006. This is also notably higher than the 6.5% average growth rate for Vancouver CMA and the 5.3% growth rate for British Columbia and reflects the high rate of residential development in the area.

²⁵ 2006 statistics for this Census Tract cannot be compared to any years prior to 2001 as the boundary delineations were dramatically different at that time given that FCN was not yet big enough to merit its 'own' Census Tract.

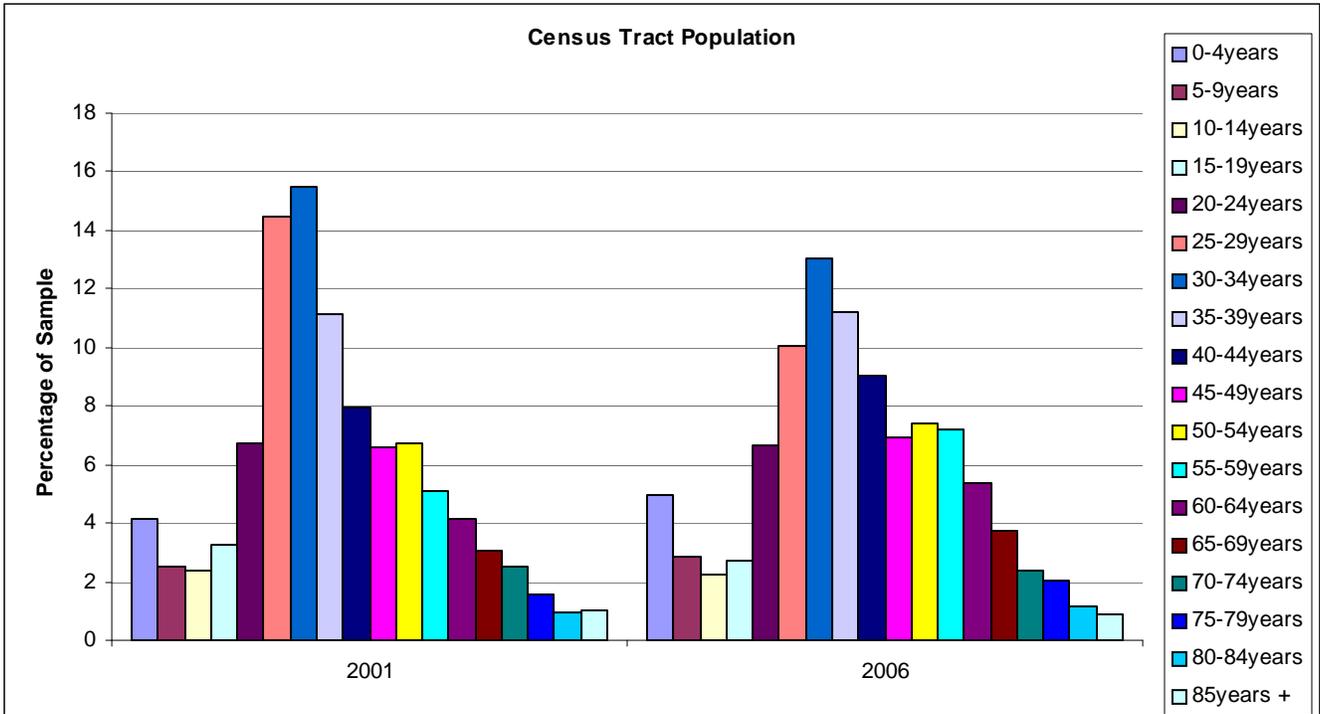


Figure 3.3.1: Census Tract 9330059.02 population, percentage of each age category.

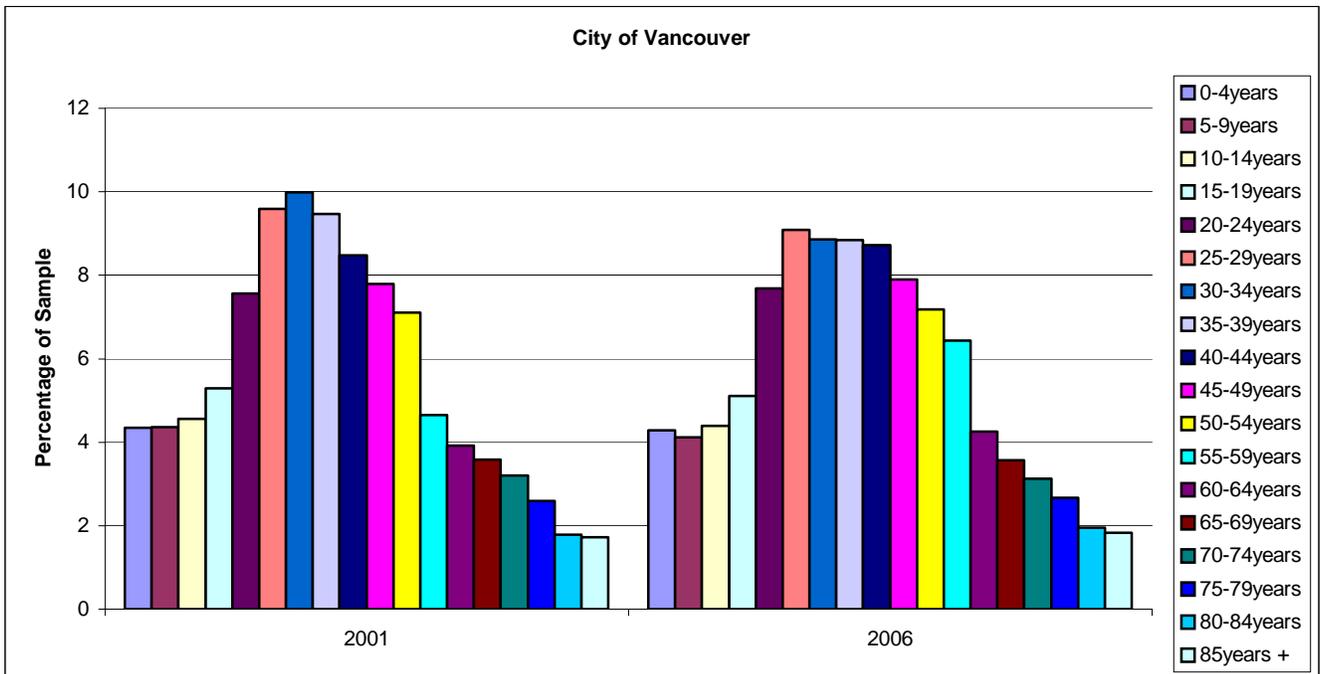


Figure 3.3.2: City of Vancouver population, percentage of each age category.

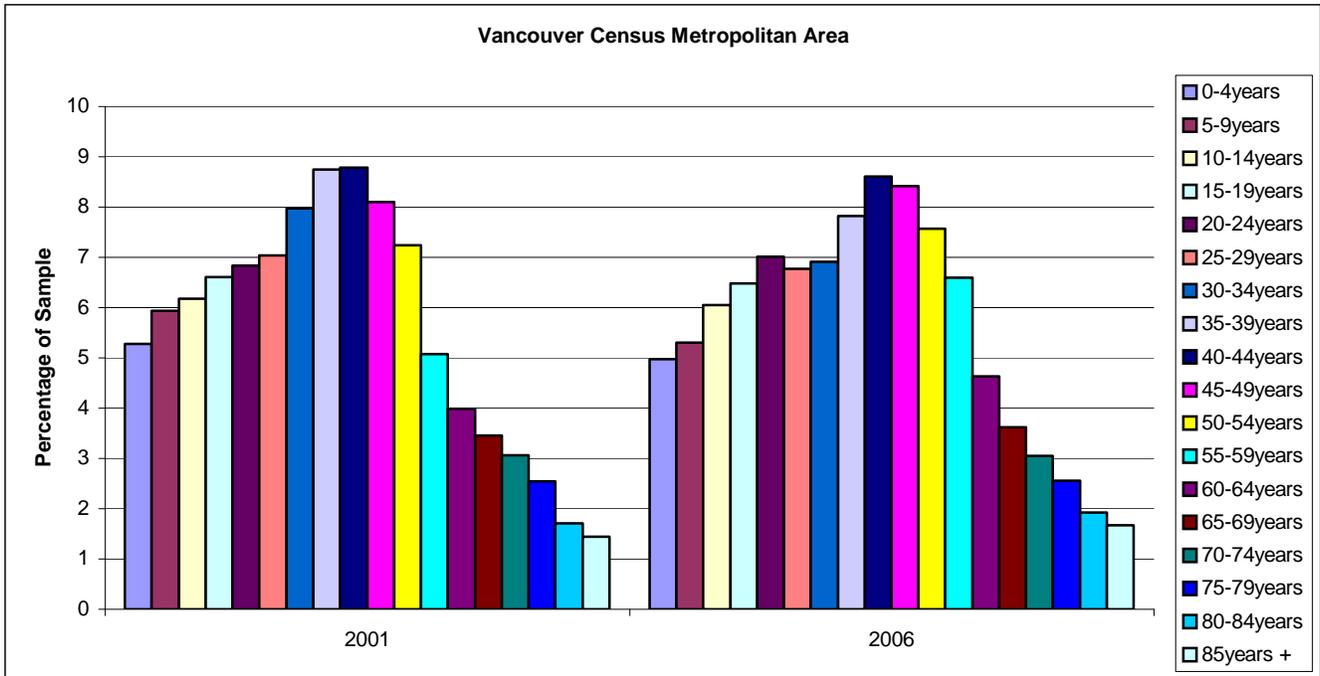


Figure 3.3.3: Census Metropolitan Area population, percentage of each age category.

The median age for residents in FCN is 38 years, which is consistent with the rest of the Vancouver CMA. Of a total of 10,570 residents, 1,355 (13%) are nineteen years of age and under and 830 (8%) are ten years of age and under. This is significantly lower than the rest of Vancouver and the Province which both average close to 23% of their population under the age of 19. Only 685 residents (4%) are seventy and older. Almost one-third of the population is between 20 to 34 years of age.

What is of special note with respect to the age distribution of the community is how FCN compares to the rest of the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver CMA and how it has changed over time. There is a distinctive 'saddle' in the population of children with a much higher percentage of children in the 0-4-year than any of the other age groups. In 2001 the next largest 'child' age group was the 15-19-year olds, although in 2006 we see that there are slightly more 5-9-year olds than 15-19-year olds; perhaps these are the children that were previously from the 0-4-year cohort in the previous census. FCN continues however to attract families with very young children; the proportion of 0-4-year olds, and in fact all children, has increased in 2006 from 2001 numbers. Overall, the demographic trends show that the population of FCN has levelled out somewhat since 2001 with a more even age range than in 2001 when the population was characterized by a very high spike of 25-34-year olds. The fact that that peak has shifted 5 years in the 2006 census suggests that the previous 25-34 year olds have remained in place. In comparison to the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver CMA, we see that there is an increasing trend of older and older children as one moves out from FCN to CoV to the CMA. The City of Vancouver has much lower percentages of children than does the CMA and has the same 'cliff' in the population from somewhat low numbers of children under the age of 19 until the 'ledge' of 20-44 year olds. CMA on the other hand has a gradual progression of all ages until the 'peak' of 35-49 year olds.

From 3660 in 2001 to 5450 in 2006 the number of occupied, private dwellings has grown by 50%. Of these dwellings, 95% are apartments in buildings with five or more storeys with 4% in ground-oriented row-houses. Over 80% of the dwelling units were built between 1986 and 2006. At 61%, there are slightly more owners than renters in FCN. The rate of home ownership is slightly less in FCN than for

the rest of Vancouver CMA (65%) or for the Province of British Columbia (70%). Of the 5,450 private dwellings occupied by permanent residents in FCN, 1295 (24%) are occupied by families (headed by either a couple or lone-parent) with children twenty-five years or younger.²⁶ Vancouver CMA has 29% and the Province has 26% families with children. Household size is smaller in FCN, with most households averaging 1.9 persons, as opposed to roughly 2.6 for Vancouver CMA or 2.5 for the Province. Forty-two percent (2,230) of the households in FCN are inhabited by one person.

The top ethnic origins (the cultural and/or ethnic roots which residents self identify with) of False Creek North residents are English, East/SE Asian (primarily Chinese), Eastern/Western European and Canadian. These are generally the same top five for Vancouver and the rest of the GVRD. However, there are significantly fewer residents of Asian descent in FCN than for the rest of Vancouver which totals roughly 40% of the population. There are more residents of European and British descent in FCN than for the rest of Vancouver.

Fifty percent of FCN residents speak English as their primary language. This is similar to residents living in Vancouver and the GVRD. Of the less dominant languages spoken, Chinese is the next most popular spoken language. False Creek North has more Spanish, Farsi and Serbian speakers than the rest of the GVRD or Vancouver.

False Creek North residents show significantly higher income levels than the rest of Vancouver or the region. Over a third of the population has a household income over \$80,000. The average household income is \$82,744. For residents living alone, the average income is \$63,249 while the average income of a two-person household is \$95,091. Households in FCN make almost \$20K more than their counterparts in the larger Metro Vancouver.

3.4 In Hindsight

Despite general acceptance of FCN by the public and the positive qualities of the collaborative planning experience, the development is not without its criticisms, which are, of course, a valuable source for evaluation. The City recognizes that improvements could have been made to improve the planning, construction and quality of life in FCN:²⁷

- In-depth sustainability analyses and projected social responses to the development, now considered best practice, should have been conducted;
- More institutions such as adequate schools, daycare and churches are needed;
- More emphasis on preserving the rich history of the site through local heritage features could add value to the community;
- The legacies of inadequate quality of construction of some of the units and associated problems associated with the 'leaky condo' era remain of concern and dissatisfaction to some residents, property owners and building managers;
- There are aesthetic challenges to developing such a large development over a short period of time; and
- The built form has been critiqued for its 'one-generation aesthetic' and the abundance of too much green glass.

²⁶ Statistics Canada defines families as "a married couple, a common law couple or a lone parent with a child or youth under the age of 25."

²⁷ Beasley, 2007

The following questions have been raised by the development community, the City and interested researchers since the occupancy of FCN:

- Have the development pressures in neighbourhoods surrounding FCN, particularly in Yaletown, led to the creation of an affluent neighbourhood which may not be meeting the needs of those of moderate income and in social housing?
- Are units meeting the needs of the range of people living in FCN?
- Could units be improved to accommodate flexibility and adaptability of use?
- To what extent do the dense built form and the marketing of a leisure and resort-type aesthetic influence community interaction and social capital?
- To what extent do the mix of land uses, which provide for a focus of activity and vibrancy in the neighbourhood, detract from the tranquility and residential feel that residents seek?
- To what extent do residents feel that high-rise living is appropriate for raising families over time?

The POE undertaken by this Project Team aimed to explore these and other concerns of residents of FCN as well as to evaluate the success of the policy directions summarized below.

3.5 Overview of City Policy as it Relates to False Creek North²⁸

The following is a review of those major City plans and policies which provide the framework for the development of the downtown's neighbourhoods.

CityPlan (1995)

In the hierarchy of City of Vancouver plans relevant to the resident-friendliness of the downtown's neighbourhoods, the document at the top is the 1995 *CityPlan*, a vision for the entire City based on extensive public consultation. It calls for a "City of Neighbourhoods", which states that one way new housing in Vancouver can help meet the needs of residents who might otherwise move to the suburbs is by locating new housing in "family-oriented" neighbourhoods, such as FCN.

CityPlan also calls for a "Sense of Community", stating that "Community services such as health and recreation programs, social programs and libraries will draw on the ideas of the people who use them, making those services widely accessible and responsive to different needs. Services will be located in the neighbourhood centres where they are easy to get to." This direction also notes that the City should "reflect the needs of the city's children and youth in City policies."

And lastly, but most geographically relevant, one way which *CityPlan* aims to achieve its direction of a "Vibrant Central Area" is by surrounding the business district with a variety of residential neighbourhoods that "provide livable environments for a variety of people."

Central Area Plan (1991)

Although adopted by Council earlier than *CityPlan*, the 1991 Central Area Plan (CAP) supports many of the same directions, albeit with specificity to the City's Central Area. Goals for the Central Area include ensuring that it is "a place to live and visit for all people and for all ages, from children to seniors." As with *CityPlan*, the CAP speaks to the creation of primarily residential neighbourhoods around and closely linked to the Central Business District, and the encouragement of "housing for families with children whenever possible." In 1991, this plan projected that the downtown peninsula population would reach 57 000 by 2006 which would be an additional 12 000 from its 45 000

²⁸ This section 3.5 is largely a direct excerpt from Brownell, 2006, pg 26-36.

population at that time; the downtown peninsula population was 85 000 in 2006, an impressive 28 000 more than was predicted in 1991.

The Plan also states that development levy requirements should be implemented in “help provide for community needs in areas being rezoned as new neighbourhoods”, and that strategies should be determined for obtaining needed amenities until such levies are in place. In the case of site-specific rezonings wherein increased housing densities are under consideration, the Plan recommends requiring Community Amenity Contributions (CACs) as a condition of rezoning.

Interestingly, the CAP also includes policy to “Develop a monitoring plan for higher density residential areas as they are built, including post-occupancy assessment, resident consultation and area reviews.” However, this initiative has not been truly implemented, as it has largely only gone as far as the encouragement of graduate student research.

“High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines”

The City’s “High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines” (updated March 1992) included three sets of guidelines - one for project planning, one for project design and one for unit design. A minimum of 25% family-suitable housing units were to be built in the FCN development;²⁹ these family-suitable units had to be located no higher than the eighth storey and had to be of a certain minimum size.³⁰ A number of the guidelines were useful in targeting our research focus. Those that are relevant to our study are discussed in Chapter VI when we discuss the key findings of the study. These guidelines touch on the following additional attributes:

1. Project Planning
 - Site selection
 - Neighbourhood compatibility
 - Number of family units
 - Household mix

2. Project Design (at the building/site scale)
 - Hierarchy of spaces
 - Common open spaces
 - Outdoor play areas for children
 - Supervision of children’s play
 - Children’s safety
 - Pedestrian circulation routes
 - Common indoor amenity space
 - Residents’ parking

3. Unit Design
 - Unit size and interior layout
 - Privacy
 - Private open space
 - Storage

²⁹ City of Vancouver, 1990

³⁰ City of Vancouver, 1992

“Plaza Design Guidelines”

The plaza guidelines also provided direction in elements to look for and evaluate in the study. While these design guidelines are used in developing public plazas, most of the guidelines are also relevant for all public open spaces. The Plaza Design Guidelines touch on the following attributes:

1. Safety (Design, accessibility, defensible space, lighting and public features)
2. Environment (Sunlight, wind, noise, weather protection, environmentally sensitive design)
3. User Attractions (Seating, activity generators, amenities, natural elements, detailing and materials spatial variety, good management).

False Creek North Official Development Plan

The Official Development Plan for FCN (FCN ODP) was approved in 1990 and involved very specific design guidelines and policies. These policies and guidelines were initially informed by False Creek Policy Broadsheets approved by City Council in 1988.³¹ The overall area is divided into smaller sub-area neighbourhoods. It is at the sub-area rezoning phase where much of the finer design, development and amenity details are set to be negotiated, based upon the ODP policies. Upon adoption of the ODP, the FCN site was rezoned as Comprehensive Development-1(CD-1) zones.³²

The ODP outlines the following *organizing principles* for FCN:

- Integrate with the city;
- Build on the setting;
- Maintain the sense of a substantial water basin;
- Use streets as an organizing device;
- Create lively places having strong imageability;
- Create neighbourhoods; and
- Plan for all age groups with a particular emphasis on children.³³

Key design elements highlighted in the ODP range from the location of retail and office space to massing and height restrictions for each building. The resulting master plan called for a comprehensive, mixed-use, high-density development planned as a series of local neighbourhoods along the north side of False Creek, each situated on a bay and separated by a large public park.³⁴ Of particular importance for the City was the integration of the development into the existing downtown street grid. City planners felt that the public street should be utilized as the “primary ordering device of city building” and therefore insisted the existing street grid be extended across Pacific Boulevard towards the shore of False Creek.

The initial ODP accommodated up to 9 818 residential units in roughly 46 high-rise towers between 15-32 storeys high. The massing of the buildings utilized a tower-podium design which enabled the developers to achieve their required density, while providing opportunities for a potentially lively street edge. The Development Plan further required a minimum of 80 feet distance between towers to maintain view corridors of the North Shore mountains and waterfront.

³¹ False Creek Broad Sheets can be accessed at: <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/guidelines/fc/index.htm>

³² These include CD-1(266), CD-1(297), CD-1(311), CD-1(324), CD-1(366), CD-1(374), CD-1(399), and CD-1(419)). CD-1 zones are used to customize zoning to specific sites in order to control basic built form, density, and land-uses. Design guidelines are further designated for specific CD-1 zones. They specify and encourage increasingly detailed design elements for the development and aim to achieve a high quality of urban design and architecture.

³³ City of Vancouver, 1990, p.4-6.

³⁴ City of Vancouver, 2003, p.13.

To prevent monochromatic aesthetic, the megaproject was divided into precincts, each with their own neighbourhood character.³⁵ These precincts also formed the rationale for the phasing strategy. Close attention was paid to design of the public realm, private and semi-private open spaces. The site accommodates a 10 metre-wide waterfront extension and completion of the Seawall loop around False Creek, 42 acres of public parks, or a minimum of 1.0 hectares of public park space for every 1,000 residents,³⁶ in addition to numerous private open spaces.

The ODP also stipulated that 15.5% of the total number of dwelling units be affordable, non-market housing, with priority given to core-needs households with children.³⁷ As of 2003, four out of the eleven planned non-market sites have been built and are fully occupied.³⁸ The completion of the remaining seven is contingent on provincial and municipal funding.

³⁵ City of Vancouver, 2003, p. 13

³⁶ Michel Desrochers, Research Planner, Planning and Operations, Park Board, personal communication, May 28, 2008.

³⁷ FCN ODP, 1990

³⁸ City of Vancouver, 2003

CHAPTER IV: PROJECT DESIGN

4.1 Post-Occupancy Evaluation as the Basis of the Research Program and Design

False Creek North, as profiled, can be characterized as a large and complex physical environment, which includes a variety of more limited environments. It functions primarily as a residential neighbourhood, serving many and varied user groups, who interact in different and complex ways. Such a complex project required the planners to craft plans and policies to guide, direct and shape both the built form and the public spaces. Generating plans and policies generally requires planners to conduct analyses of demographic, socio-economic and physical data and information. While information of this type is important to substantiate development plans, a review of this research informs us these types of data and information only reveal a general picture of the neighbourhood system. To compensate for data and information limitations, planners sometimes rely on information collected in unsystematic or idiosyncratic ways, some of it intuitive, that they assemble in the course of their work. Neither of these two types of information can substitute for systematically collected information and data from residents themselves when planning a neighbourhood. Therefore, an evaluative approach, suited to the particular characteristics of individual neighbourhoods, enables collection of detailed and systematic information critical to inform future planning and development. Further, systematic evaluation may encourage researchers and planners to integrate evaluations into neighbourhood planning processes.¹ Further, “to get the most from a POE, it needs to be planned for at the outset of the project. Putting POE on the project agenda from the start will focus the minds of the project team on how the outcome of the project will be measured and it enables the team to structure and record relevant information throughout the project. Often when an evaluation is carried out after a building project, people have forgotten why decisions were made.”²

Post-occupancy evaluation (POE) is the research process commonly used to evaluate environments. It can be defined as a systematic evaluation of a designed and occupied setting from the perspectives of those who use it.³ Further, the evaluation must be conducted primarily from the standpoint of residents, as they perceive and evaluate the multiplicity of events in the context of their neighbourhoods in ways that are without question different from those of an outside observer.⁴ The focus of a POE is on occupants and their needs; this provides insights into the consequences of past design decisions and the resulting building and site performance. This knowledge can form a sound basis for creating better buildings and other spaces and places in the future,⁵ when the findings are integrated into the planning and design process. While most of the research and POE case studies have been performed on buildings, there is no reason to limit a POE to a single type of environment.⁶

One of the important ways in which POE differs from other kinds of research is in its comprehensiveness. In principle, it evaluates all aspects of the environment, from lighting and acoustics to privacy and performance, rather than focusing on one particular aspect.

POEs have been used as an evaluative framework since the late 1960s. They were used initially to evaluate the suitability and successes of residential environments and public housing, but were soon

¹ Churchman & Ginosar, 1999.

² Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), 2006, p.9

³ Cooper Marcus and Francis, 2001.

⁴ Churchman & Ginosar, 1999.

⁵ Preiser, 1994.

⁶ Cooper Marcus and Francis, 2001.

recognized for their usefulness at evaluating other public works such as hospitals and prisons, as well as private buildings, such as offices, commercial buildings and dormitories.⁷ More recently, evaluations of building performances have been conducted under the Building Performance Evaluation (BPE) framework. This framework focuses primarily on evaluating the environmental and technical, and less so the social, aspects of the building performance and does not require that the building actually be occupied before it can be evaluated.⁸ Some of the benefits are summarized below.

4.1.1 Benefits of Post-Occupancy Evaluations

Short-term benefits of a well conducted POE include:⁹

- Identification of and finding solutions to problems in buildings;
- Response to user needs;
- Improve space utilization based on feedback from use;
- Understanding of implications on buildings of change whether it is budget cuts or working context; and
- Informed decision-making.

Medium-term benefits of POE include:

- Built-in capacity for building adaptation to organizational change and growth;
- Finding new uses for buildings; and
- Accountability for building performance by designers.

Longer-term benefits of POE include:

- Long-term improvements in building performance;
- Improvement in design quality; and
- Strategic review.

The greatest benefits from POEs occur when information is made available to as wide an audience as possible, beyond the organization whose building is evaluated, to planners and designers, the development and construction industries and the academic community. Findings from POEs can provide not only insights into problems and their resolution but also useful benchmark data with which other projects can be compared.¹⁰

4.1.2 Characteristics of a Post-Occupancy Evaluation

Evaluations can be categorized into three frameworks based on levels of effort, degrees of sophistication and data and information-gathering techniques, cost and staffing,¹¹ each of which reveals varying depths of descriptive and analytical understanding as to what is or is not working for the occupant and why.

The first framework, the *Indicative POE*, the least expensive and shortest, indicating major successes and failures, without offering reasons. This is the 'quick-and-dirty' version what nevertheless provides useful information and can be used as the basis of a more in-depth study.¹²

⁷ Sarkissian, 2007, pers. comm.

⁸ Sarkissian, 2007, pers. comm.

⁹ This list taken directly from: HEFCE, 2006, p.8.

¹⁰ HEFCE, 2006.

¹¹ Preiser, Rabinowitz & White, 1988.

¹² HEFCE, 2006, p.10.

The second type, the *Investigative POE*, is more time-consuming, uses more sophisticated data- and information-collection and analysis techniques and has the potential to reveal systemic factors that might contribute to the successes and failures.

The third and most rigorous is the *Diagnostic POE*. Multiple methods are used and correlations among physical, environmental and behavioural performance are examined. The intent is to use results to inform long-term recommendations to planning guidelines and design criteria. This is the most resource-intensive and comprehensive of the frameworks.

Post-occupancy evaluation process model

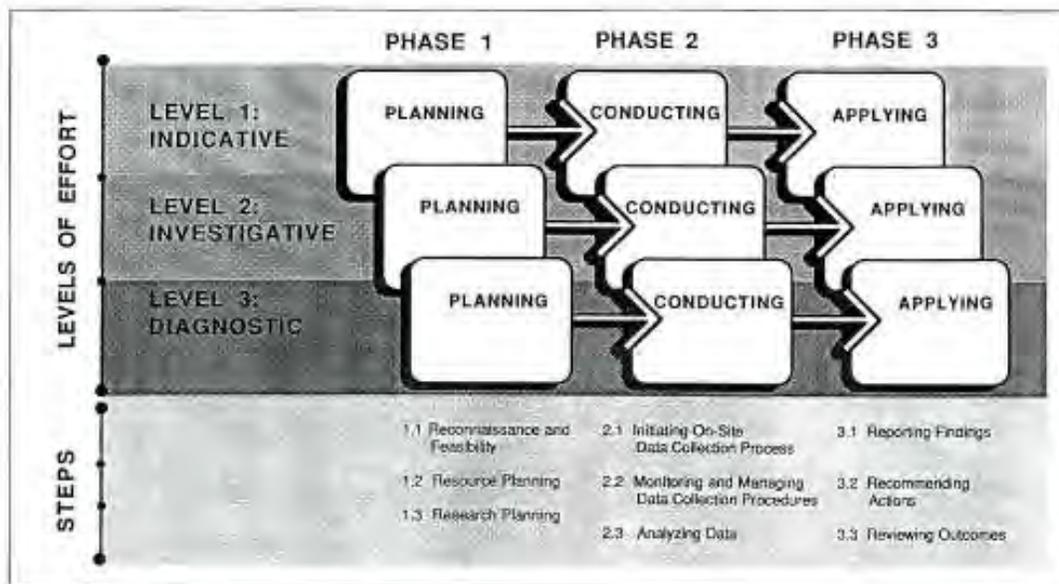


Figure 4.1.1: Types of post-occupancy evaluations classified by level of effort, and the process in conducting POEs.¹³

An *investigative* POE approach was used in the evaluation of FCN. It requires sophisticated data and information collection and analysis techniques and has the potential to reveal systematic factors that might contribute to the successes or failures of the development.

All POEs involve three steps: planning, conducting and applying. The planning stage is often the most intensive phase: reconnaissance of the site is conducted, resources and research planned, and feasibility assessed. In the conducting phase, the research plan is enacted: research methods are employed yielding data and information collection and prompting analysis. The applying phase involves reporting of findings and recommendations to guide future developments, the ultimate aim of a POE.

¹³ Preiser, Rabinowitz & White, 1988.

Although all POEs will be context and resource specific, there are a number of things to consider when aiming to conduct a good POE. It should:

- Have appropriate objectives;
- Have appropriate scale and scope;
- Be supported and understood by the client and users;
- Generate directly relevant information;
- Be a good value for the money;
- Present findings in a useful and communicative format;
- Build on and contribute to existing research; and
- Be adopted and acted on.

The most accurate evaluation can usually be gained from employing a combination of techniques as long as the research design:

- Is holistic (consider the interplay between the physical environment, facilities provision, and organizational attitudes);
- Looks for both cause and effect;
- Verifies subjective results either by taking objective measurements or through balancing subjective opinions from a broad range of people;
- Involves different groups of people (assessing perception and reality, for example in the case of productivity impacts, do staff and managers' opinions coincide); and
- Uses transparent methodology so that results can be interpreted with the appropriate degree of assurance, limitations can be understood, and repeatable if benchmarking is to be undertaken.¹⁴

4.2 The Research Design for the FCN POE

4.2.1 The Project Team

In this document the title "Project Team" refers to the professors who instructed and the students enrolled in the course. The various backgrounds and interests of the instructors, students, developers and residents of FCN contributed to the project's comprehensive set of research objectives.

For example, Larry Beasley was a key orchestrator of the FCN development while working in the capacity as co-director of City Planning for the City of Vancouver. Therefore, he was interested in evaluating the policies that reflect his direct role in formulating. Larry brings a strong contextual and historical perspective to research.

Dr Wendy Sarkissian has worked as a social planning consultant and is interested in evaluating the livability of high-density, high-rise living for residents in general and for families and people on lower incomes in particular. Wendy brought to the research a rich experience of working with such communities.

The twenty-four students involved in the research program were all in their first or second years of their masters in planning degrees and brought a diversity of backgrounds and experiences to the

¹⁴ This list borrowed from: HEFCE, 2006.

research project.¹⁵ As planners in training, the students recognized the importance of evaluating how past policies, processes and implementation strategies contribute to the satisfaction of users of existing developments and can be used to inform future practice.

Professors Larry Beasley and Wendy Sarkissian teamed up to design and manage the three-term course with the intention of simulating a “consulting firm practice” or planning office environment in which the students acted as professional consultants and colleagues. From the outset, it was made clear that the class (instructors and students) were to work together as equals in making decisions and seeing the evaluation to completion. In many respects, this course offered a unique practical opportunity to students interested in gaining insight into the practice of such work, working directly with a local development as a case study, consulting with the developers, engaging with the respective community, and contributing to advancement of POE practices and dissemination of the research findings, all under the guidance of two distinguished practitioners.

4.2.2 Planning the FCN POE: January-April 2007

The Spring, 2007 course consisted primarily of learning about the theory, philosophy and process of POEs, the specifics of the FCN site, formulating appropriate research questions for the evaluation and researching suitable methods to answer these questions. A central challenge to planning the research program was balancing research questions which are diverse. All perspectives were taken into consideration in informing the final questions formulated in the final research tools. Specific methods were also researched during the Spring and are discussed in the sections below.

Because POE methods and existing studies had been extensively reviewed during this time, students gained confidence and a clear sense of the direction of the POE research program, as it progressed to the fall implementation stage. The concerted work of the spring class produced a report that documented decisions and outlined directions for new and continuing students who would see the evaluation to completion. For a more detailed account of the process and outcomes of this component of the research program, see the final spring report: *False Creek North Post-Occupancy Evaluation: Towards an Implementation Strategy*.¹⁶

4.2.3 Observing Behaviour in the FCN Public Realm: Summer, 2007

The one-week intensive summer course conducted by Dr Sarkissian was designed to ground students in the FCN site during a season of most intensive use of the site. The summer course emphasized user needs in public open space and focused on park, playground, public open space and plaza design, user preferences and observation methods. A strong focus was on empirical research in environmental psychology that reveals people’s preferences for certain types of open spaces. The research on the restorative power of Nature in the urban context was also discussed in detail.

The course was supported by lectures and site visits with distinguished guest speakers and local residents of False Creek South, as well as numerous guided site observations. While no specific decisions about the broader POE research program were made at this time, observations from site visits were documented and the literature on specific user needs in public spaces was critically reviewed. These findings, reviews and briefing notes were compiled for the use of researchers in the fall term. This material has been summarized in the compilation reports: *Compendium of Original Summer Briefing Notes* and *Evaluating the Public Open Spaces in False Creek North: A Summer Omnibus: Research Recommendations*.¹⁷

¹⁵ Except one: James White was a PhD candidate at the time.

¹⁶ To receive copies of this report, please contact Nancy Hofer at nancy.hofer@gmail.com

¹⁷ Nancy Hofer also has copies of these reports.

At this time, one student, Marian Thomas, undertook a for-credit directed study of the demographic profile for FCN. This work involved a compilation and analysis of 2001 and 2006 Census data on various demographic characteristics and was essential to understanding the community composition and trends in the study area.

4.2.4 Implementing the Research Program: September, 2007 - May, 2008

The final phase of the coursework involved implementation of the evaluation process itself. A planning student, Nancy Hofer, was hired on a part-time basis to coordinate and address the logistics of the research program. Data and information about resident satisfaction with and use of various components of the neighbourhood were collected using five methods that had been researched and chosen during the previous spring term.

4.2.5 The Research Questions Used to Guide the Methodology

Seven themes, or areas of inquiry, were used to guide and group the research questions in each of the methods.¹⁸ Questions were formulated around the following themes:

1. Parks and Public Open Spaces
2. Shops, Services and Amenities
3. Mobility and Transportation
4. Community Safety
5. The Residential Building
6. The Dwelling Unit
7. Sense of Community
8. Perceived Sustainability of FCN
9. Factors Influencing the Decision to Live in FCN

These areas of inquiry were distilled through the process of identifying the user groups, the specific topics and the research questions selected for evaluation, each of which is described below. Due to the resources and scope of the project, it was not possible to collect data for every research question. The following is to illustrate the rich and comprehensive thinking that went into the process of formulating the final research program.

User groups: The project team articulated a desire to document the experiences of a wide range of user groups including:

- Age groups: children, youth, adults, seniors
- Family compositions: families with children, singles, couples, empty nesters
- Different genders
- Cultural Groups
- People with disabilities
- Those living in social housing
- Those working from home offices
- Pet owners

Specific topics - The Project team recognized a broad range of specific topics (extracted from FCN policies and site reconnaissance) that could be considered for evaluation. Those below marked with an * were explicitly evaluated:

¹⁸ Perceived sustainability of FCN was only explicitly discussed in the interview method and the factors influencing the decision to live in FCN was gleaned through all the thematic areas and thus not formally considered its own topic area.

- Affordability*
- Commercial services*
- Community centre*
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Cultural preferences
- Food and grocery stores*
- Governance (stratas)
- Imageability
- Linkages to the city
- Marketing strategies
- Neighbourhood identity and character
- Parks and open spaces*
- Perception of “home”*
- Placemaking
- Suitability of neighbourhood for dogs*
- Privacy*
- Public realm - streets, seaside walkway*
- Semi-private spaces*
- Seniors living in FCN*
- Sense of “community”*
- Shops, specialty stores*
- Social mix and tenure diversification*
- Social service needs
- Space hierarchies
- Stewardship (ownership) of the community
- Tower-podium
- Turn-over
- Unit satisfaction*
- Universal access
- Views (long vs. intimate)

A broad range of **Research Questions** were devised to reflect the levels of policy in FCN, as well as the specific interests of the developers (research funders), course instructors, students and consulted experts from the City of Vancouver Planning Department, the Parks Board and interested architecture firms. The following * questions were used to directly shape the questions used in the various methods employed:

- *Resident Satisfaction*: What factors (marketing promises? walkability? closer to work? etc.) influenced residents’ decisions to move to FCN?* How closely were expectations related to these factors met? Since moving to FCN, how have residents’ day-to-day experiences changed from their previous living arrangements? What positive and negative aspects are now experienced that they didn’t anticipate?
- *Longevity*: Considering lifestyle, family and health/aging changes, to what extent do the amenities of FCN (unit, complex, public realm, neighbourhood amenities) contribute to long-term residency in FCN?*
- *Congruence and Fit*: How did residents choose their unit design and what are resident satisfaction levels with respect to the design of their unit and neighbourhood complex?* Does the design meet their lifestyle needs, fulfillment of social status, professional and family needs?*
- *Sense of Community*: To what extent do residents feel a “sense of community” in their neighbourhood?*
- *Awareness of Mix*: How aware are residents of the different socio-economic and cultural groups in their neighbourhood?* How did this awareness affect their decision to move to FCN and how does this awareness affect their satisfaction and use of the space now?*
- *Social Mix*: To what extent do different groups (age, socio-economic, cultural) of FCN mix socially? If so, how and where? If not, why not?
- *Special Needs*: What are the special needs of residents in social housing units?* Are they being met?

- *Public Amenities:* How do residents of FCN use the public amenities such as public open spaces and the community centre, and which spaces/programs do they use?* Does the design of the public realm meet the various user groups' needs for functionality, safety and aesthetics?* How differently do the different user groups use these spaces?
- *Commercial Amenities:* Which commercial amenities (cafés, food and grocery stores, shops, etc.) are most used and why?* Do they adequately serve the user groups living in the building?* How differently do the different user groups use these spaces?
- *Special Places:* Which places in FNC have become Special Places? Why? How differently do the different user groups use these spaces?
- *Perceived Sustainability of the Neighbourhood:* How important is the concept of sustainability, and in particular environmental sustainability, to the residents of FCN?* How do they define it?* Do residents perceive FCN to be an example of a sustainable community?* What actions do they take to minimize their ecological footprint? Are there additional facilities and programs they would like to see to help them reduce their ecological impact?*

4.2.6 The Methodology Used to Develop the Core Story

At the same time as articulating the research questions, the Project Team undertook detailed research about possible methods that could be used in the evaluation. There was a focus on method, implementation logistics, costs and analysis techniques. Only those approaches that met the following criteria were selected for the evaluation:

- Methodologically sound and well-recognized in the literature;
- Resource effective (in terms of time and costs);
- Appropriate given the skill sets of the Project Team; and
- Complimented the other methods and allowed for triangulation of results.

Importantly, the chosen collection of methods had to allow for coverage of the greatest range of user groups and themes.

Based on these criteria, the following methods were selected (see the following section for the comprehensive list of all methods researched):

- Mail-out survey questionnaire;
- In-depth interviews;
- World Café focus group discussion;
- Community event: "Have YOUR Say!" day;
- Photo-collage exercise with elementary students.

The method used to reach the greatest number of residents in the community was the mail-out survey questionnaire. Recognized as a standard proven method in evaluations, this method can target a large sample at a relatively low cost. Nevertheless, responses can be somewhat limiting given the nature of the research tool. Therefore, the other qualitative in-depth methods were used to complement the questionnaire findings and yield a richer context and narrative.

A multi-method approach is essential for two reasons:

- It reinforces the credibility of the data and information and the credibility of the interpretation; and
- It constructs a fuller picture of the state of the neighbourhood. The use of diverse methods offers the possibility of triangulation between findings, enabling building of a multi-layered picture of the neighbourhood. This picture ultimately supports identification of key findings and recommendations for future developments.¹⁹

Each method is summarized below. For a more comprehensive discussion of the methods, including sampling procedure, implementation and analysis, see the research papers in: *False Creek North Post-Occupancy Evaluation: Towards an Implementation Strategy*. The following five methods are also described in more detail in each of the method sections in Chapter V: Methods & Analysis.

Mail-out Survey Questionnaire

A self-complete questionnaire is usually a standardized list of questions completed by a respondent, normally without the assistance of a researcher or interviewer. It can contain closed- and open-ended questions and can be administered via the mail, over the Internet or on the telephone. A mail-out questionnaire provides the most efficient use of time and resources, given its potential distribution to 100% of the sample area. The response rate, however, is generally below 50% and respondents cannot receive easy and immediate clarification of questions, if required. Further, written questionnaires can be intimidating for those with low levels of formal literacy or who dislike the 'formal' or official format of written forms. The types of questions and the detail of responses required are also limited due to the questionnaire's standardized format.

In-depth Interviews

Extensive inquiry and open-ended questions characterize in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews involve asking questions and systematic recording and documenting of responses, coupled with repeated interviews with the target audience (or respondent) to elicit deeper meaning and understanding of their responses.²⁰ In a typical in-depth interview, an interview guide is followed. It includes a list of questions or issues to be explored and suggested probes for following up on key topics. If the researcher plans to utilize in-depth interviews for exploration or scoping purposes, interviews need to be conducted during the initial stages of the research. In this research context, we took an alternative approach and used the in-depth interviews to explore in greater depth issues raised by responses to other methods.

Community event: "Have YOUR Say!" day

This community event was based on the SpeakOut model, a specific community engagement method designed to create a safe, welcoming and energetic environment where all participants feel comfortable voicing their ideas. In this hybrid between a workshop and an 'open house', participants can drop in and make comments in their own time at their own pace without the constraints of a workshop program. Broad categories with questions and photographs act as initial prompts for discussion.

¹⁹ Churchman & Ginosar, 1999.

²⁰ Guion, 2006.

A listener solicits information from participants in their informal environment by asking open-ended, non-judgmental questions and by listening carefully to the participant's responses. Meanwhile, a recorder carefully records those comments *verbatim*, thereby avoiding researcher bias and maintaining the full meaning and emotion of the participants' words.

Participants' ideas, written with large markers on flip chart paper, are then posted around the category's stall. These serve as further prompts to subsequent participants and foster a continuing dialogue. Embodiment is another guiding characteristic of the SpeakOut method. Practitioners working with consultative methods are increasingly recognizing that community members tend to participate more openly and energetically when they are able to engage not only their minds, but also their hands, bodies and creative energies. A mix of interactive exercises and methods provides hands-on and visual aids that help to engage a variety of learning styles.

World Café Focus Group Discussion

Originally developed in 1995, the World Café (WC) model is a community engagement process based on the idea that people already possess the wisdom, knowledge, and creativity to address even the most complex challenges and issues. By creating a hospitable, comfortable and welcoming context for the mutual discussion and sharing ideas, the WC process encourages and facilitates the cross-pollination of ideas and insights among the participants. The process begins with seating groups of four to five people at small café tables and setting up three rounds of conversation of approximately twenty to thirty minutes each.

At the end of each round, the participants change tables, while one member of each group stays behind as the table host. The table host briefs the new group on the conversation held by the previous group and the discussions are thus built upon, as the participants travel and regroup from table to table. By providing opportunities for people to move in several rounds of conversation, themes and commonalities begin to emerge that might otherwise not be recognized. At the end of the rounds of conversation, a whole group conversation identifies patterns and possibilities for future action. The intention behind the use of the World Café format in a POE setting was to allow a more in-depth exploration by participants of issues that are difficult to address in the questionnaire or SpeakOut methods, but that allow for more group discussion than an in-depth interview.

'Week with a Camera' Photo-collage Exercise with Elementary Students

Given that children cannot vote and do not have decision-making power over planning decisions, it's important to include them in evaluation research, this technique is a way of helping planners and designers understand the "mental maps" children hold in their heads about their neighbourhoods. It enables participants to document use of environments and to articulate their wishes for that environment. Significant landmarks, play circuits, focal points, and "sacred places" in the children's realm can also be identified. It is best used when you want photographic documentation of children's use of their built and natural environments. It can be used alone or in conjunction with other techniques. We have seen a variation of this technique used with adults and have used it with great success with children in both urban and remote rural locations.

In False Creek North, children are a group that intensively uses the site and especially its public spaces. The 'Week with a Camera' model is a qualitative research technique designed to help planners understand a particular issue from the perspective of children. It enables the children to document how they use and perceive the environment, both natural and built. Significant landmarks, play circuits, focal points, and "sacred places" in the children's realm can also be identified. The process, widely used in Austral as a research and engagement tool, involves providing disposable

cameras to children and instructing them to photograph elements in their neighbourhood that are important to them. These children then attend an intensively facilitated workshop where they have an opportunity to create a collage using their photographs and explain their choice of photographs to a facilitator. Careful documentation of all children's comments assists in building up a picture of the components of the neighbourhood that are valuable for children.

4.2.7 Other Methodologies Researched, but not Used in the Evaluation

The remaining methods considered, but not used in the evaluation are outlined below. They were not used because they did not meet the criteria above, although many are suitable as POE methodologies. They are organized by the following broad categories: direct questioning, solicited diaries, participatory mapping, creative approaches with children, observation, photo exposé and workshops.

Other Direct Questioning Methods

These methods involve questions that seek specific answers and data and information capture which address overall research questions. The questioning is direct and relies on the question-answer format conducted directly with interviewees, focus group participants, and questionnaire respondents. Mail-out questionnaires and in-depth interviews, described above, are both direct questioning methods. For a more comprehensive discussion of the methods, including sampling procedure, implementation and analysis, see the research papers in: *False Creek North Post-Occupancy Evaluation: Towards an Implementation Strategy*.

Telephone Questionnaires

These are a common way of soliciting responses quickly. This approach offers opportunity for skilled interviewers to clarify questions and elicit longer or more complete answers than often provided on written questionnaires. Major drawbacks include a sense of scepticism and distrust of strangers soliciting information via telephone and the increasing number of people using cell phones whose numbers are not in conventional directories.

Web-based Questionnaires

This method has been found to provide rapid turnaround times, low non-response/item rate and a high rate of open-ended responses, with less recruitment effort than mail-out and telephone questionnaires. However, it is not recommended for general audiences, as it tends to over-represent young, well-educated people and those with above average technological sophistication. The questionnaires may also be perceived as "junk mail" and ignored by the receiver.

Focus Groups

Focus groups provide a useful format for collecting information from various people at one time. If the groups are well facilitated and organized, participants should converse freely and openly, generating conversations around a particular topic, which hopefully provide the researcher with what is known as "rich data," as opposed to the close-ended responses generally garnered from surveys and polls. A focus group is facilitated by a moderator who leads a group discussion of specific issues and themes selected in advance. The process is generally structured to allow for interaction among the participants to discuss various feelings and personal views, experiences, knowledge and opinions on selected topics. Critics argue that there is a high likeliness of self-censorship and conformity among participants of focus groups thus compromising the value of the output.

Solicited Diaries

This is a research method that aims to gather longitudinal information about peoples' lived experience. As with other 'snapshot' methods where information is gathered during meetings with participants, participants must recall experiences that they are not living at that time. Participants have time to consider what they are tasked to record and may provide more insightful information.

Solicited Personal Diary with Photography

This involves giving participants guidelines about what they are about to record in written and photographic form and asking them to keep the diary over a period. In-depth interviews are usually conducted afterwards and/or sometimes before and analysis is done via coding and looking for themes.

Trip and Activity Diaries

These approaches involve trips or events over time, usually between one day and one week. They may be followed up with interviews that potentially uncover perceptions and attitudes about the neighbourhood. Both quantifiable data (number of trips, routes, types of destinations), and qualitative information (preferences, conditioning factors) are generated. Strengths are its flexibility to answer a number of different types of research questions, the depth of information gathered, and the accuracy of the data and information (compared to recall data and information). Drawbacks include time commitment from participants, which may lead to low participation or high dropout rates.

Participatory Mapping

When used as a tool for community engagement and participation, mapping provides a graphic spatial representation of people's social and physical environments (interior and exterior). The making of a map – or the interaction with an existing map – can tap into local knowledge about a place and stimulate discussions around how residents feel about and use the natural and built environments, the nature of community, social interactions and their significance and the meaning of home. Researchers can also use observation and mapping to document how people move about their community, routes they take and the community's accessibility in terms of mobility. Mapping is combined with a survey questionnaire or interviews that elicit richer information.

Behavioural Mapping

This method is a simple pedestrian tracking process, supported by a questionnaire given to the subject. Individuals are selected at random and tracked inconspicuously to their final destination. At that point, they are approached and provided a short questionnaire, asking them to describe some of the details of their trip, plus other relevant information about their activities and routes. It is believed that such a method could be undertaken quickly and efficiently, capture several subjects and provide accurate and timely data and information. Drawbacks include ethical considerations of tracking people without their knowledge and the possible unintentional bias of selection of pedestrians by the researcher.

Interior Spatial Mapping

This method involves creation by the resident of a map or illustration of the interior floor plan of a suite, apartment or condominium unit. By drawing their floor plan, respondents begin to consider all areas of their suite to trigger thinking about specific attributes. The resident may provide information about details of interest to developers and builders. Interior Spatial Mapping is a form of cognitive mapping that has traditionally been utilized for determining wayfinding in urban environments.

Social Mapping

This method provides a visual representation of how people view or use an area and reveals attitudes toward other community members or groups. Informants can be asked to draw maps from scratch or they can be given basic or detailed maps and asked to draw or indicate their uses or views of the area in question. They can then be asked about their representations and questioned about specific details. Social maps often focus on a specific topic, for example economic resources, social interaction or housing. Among other things, they can reveal attitudes toward other community members or groups.

Asset Mapping

This method involves collecting an inventory of all the good things in a community, and discovering the reasons why people put high value on certain aspects in the neighbourhood. It challenges residents to recognize how other people see and live in the same community. It can also be used to highlight limitations and liabilities.

Barefoot Mapping

See Creative Approaches with Children and Youth.

Creative Approaches with Children and Youth

Taking the position that children and young people are citizens and not citizens-in-the-making, an engaged citizenry must not exclude any social, cultural or age group and must promote the inclusion of everyone's knowledge as valid and valuable. Therefore, approaches to research with children are an integral part of any post-occupancy evaluation. Because children and youth perceive, understand and communicate about the world differently from adults, specialized techniques are needed to provide ways for children and youth to express their unique and informed perspectives of their lived experiences. Such techniques are generally highly visual, tactile, relevant, interactive and enjoyable for all involved. Beyond the use of the methods, using these methods is consistent with contemporary leading practice. These are only authentic, however, as long as children and youth are given maximum opportunity to guide the process, communicate and interpret their own views through a variety of agencies and methods.

Role Playing with Dolls

This method is designed for children in primary grades (ages 5-8). A model of one or several neighbourhoods is fabricated in advance, containing recognizable neighbourhood elements that help the participants orient themselves. Participants are given dolls or figurines that could represent themselves, friends and parents and are encouraged to role-play their daily interactions with, and movements through, this space. Attention is paid to perceptions of safety, spaces for play and movement through the built environment. Children's performances may be videotaped and interpreted by researchers. Alternatively, for a more participatory approach, children can be made aware of the research objectives from the start, and take on an active role in the interpretation of their dramas.

Modeling with Materials

In this innovative technique to engage children in a community participation process, children are asked to create three-dimensional models or maps using food, clay, etc., to represent their environments. These models can then be used as a focus of discussion between the researcher and young person.

Barefoot Mapping

This technique is particularly oriented towards youth. Participants are asked to evaluate their neighbourhood using various means of analysis and expression (visual, written, oral), while drawing on mapped representations of this space. They use their hands, feet, eyes and ears as guides. Barefoot mapping is as much a community-building tool as a mapping exercise. Designed as part of a youth engagement process, such a process is a relatively low cost, tried-and-true method that takes little time. Analysis takes place during and after the workshop and is often conducted with involvement of the participants.

Observation

Observation is the act of watching and recording features and events in a given area. Techniques range from informal to rigorous and can be used to inform other methods or as a method in itself. Many specific types of observation have been used to elicit specific information.

Photo-Exposé

For this method, residents would be asked to refer to any marketing materials they reviewed before purchasing their home, as well as provide real photographs of their homes. In comparing these materials, residents discuss their satisfaction with their lived experience in comparison to their perceptions of the community before moving there.

Workshops and Community Events

Methods that allow for a group of participants to come together and discuss their experiences collectively in an informal setting can foster community awareness, as well as yield research findings. Many methods used in community engagement combine research and consolation processes. The SpeakOut community event model employed in this study falls under this category.

Embedded Methods Workshop

This method makes use of a daylong workshop in which a variety of stations are used to permit participants to simultaneously engage with a number of intense methods in a short period of time. This format allows researchers to make efficient use of time and staffing by hosting multiple methods at the same time and location. It can also create an enjoyable atmosphere for the community members involved. The SpeakOut model could fit into this classification. A possible additional outcome from such an event can include increased community interaction and potential increases in neighbourliness.

4.3 Limitations of this Research

All researchers will bring a certain degree of bias to the research program. Although it is impossible to be completely objective, Project Team members hope that by being conscious of and reflecting on our biases, we were successful in designing a study in which the occupants are given the ability to tell the story of their experience of living in FCN. Aside from the potential for researcher bias, there are other limitations related to the representation of the sample. Although the study respondents are generally representative of the larger FCN population in terms of family size and age, there are higher proportions of owners and higher-income earners as compared to Census data. The majority of the in-depth interview respondents fit this description and were or had been involved in their strata committees. Further, our study does not account for the perspectives of those residents who have moved from FCN. Understanding the role of the community itself in

decisions to move from the community would undoubtedly help us identify other issues of concern. There is a need for further research into the experiences of living and raising a family in FCN. The findings from this study, while comprehensive, raise further questions into what works and what could be improved for families. We have only begun to scratch the surface of the information and insights that a comprehensive post-occupancy evaluation can yield.

CHAPTER V: METHODS & ANALYSIS

A mixed-method approach was used in this evaluation because it reinforces the credibility of the data and interpretation and it constructs a fuller picture of the state of the neighbourhood. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed. The use of diverse methods offers the possibility of triangulation between findings, which enables the building of a multi-layered picture of the state of the neighbourhood. This picture ultimately supports identification of key findings and recommendations for future developments¹ which are discussed respectively in Chapters VI: Discussion of key findings, and VII: Recommendations.

Each method section described below is a discrete piece of research and is presented as such. Each method discusses only the findings from the data collected in that method. Some method chapters, notably the questionnaire and in-depth interview, are longer than others due to the comprehensiveness of the material covered and size of sample. Each method section contains the following elements:

- Setting and Procedure
- Sampling Strategy and Participant Profile
- Results and Discussion. These cover the targeted topic areas in the following order:
 - o Community
 - o Public Spaces
 - o Movement and Transportation
 - o Shops, Facilities and Services
 - o Safety
 - o The Building
 - o The Unit
 - o Perceived Sustainability of FCN²
 - o Decision Making
- Summary of Findings

Because not all methods covered the eight topic areas equally, each method section highlights those findings that were prevalent in that method. As such, there is some variation in how, and what, results are presented within this framework.

The methods employed in the False Creek North post-occupancy evaluation are presented in the following order:

- Mail-out Questionnaire
- SpeakOut Community Event
- World Café
- Week with a Camera with Youth
- In-depth Interviews

¹ Churchman and Ginosar, 1999.

² This topic area was only covered by the in-depth interview method.

Method 1: MAIL-OUT QUESTIONNAIRE

1.0 Setting and Procedure

1.1 The Mail-out Questionnaire Model

The questionnaire is a well-established qualitative research method that is generally used to solicit responses from a large, general population and is one of the most widely used research tools.

The mail-out questionnaire is one of the most common types of questionnaires. It typically contains a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and instructions to the participants, followed by a series of open- or closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions allow for more complete expression by a respondent, tap unanticipated answers and are less likely to introduce bias by limiting responses to a pre-determined list. However, they can be vague, difficult to interpret, selective in respondents (i.e. more likely to be answered by educated populations), as well as subjective and time consuming for researchers to code.³

Closed-ended questions are more varied in type, as they often include binary answers (yes/no), multiple choice, or scale answers (e.g. a Likert Scale). When using multiple choice or scale answers, it is important to provide options that are virtually exhaustive of possible responses and that each response is mutually exclusive so that only one answer is selected. Closed-ended questions must be carefully crafted to provide opportunity for a wide spectrum of responses, yet the list of responses must be kept short enough that respondents will still read each possible answer. Closed-ended questionnaires are usually favoured because they place less demand on respondents, responses are uniform and the data is easy to code for the researchers.⁴

The return of the questionnaire by mail is a vulnerable part of the process, as it requires the time, physical effort and, if return postage is not included, monetary cost from the respondent. This may increase the incidence of non-response or even loss of the questionnaire.⁵ The reliance on postal mail delays the already lengthy response time, which, including delivery and return, is generally reported to be between four and twelve weeks. Gillham suggests a rule of thumb that can give an early indication to what response rate to expect: responses after about ten days are likely to be approximately half of the total questionnaires that will be returned.⁶

The questionnaire data analysis is typically broken down into subject descriptors and the actual questions. Subject descriptors are the questions that describe the respondents that can be used to categorize the respondents such as age, income, or length of residency.⁷

Analyzing closed-ended questions is a rather simple descriptive task that usually uses summary tables in a spreadsheet that can sum the different responses and allow the researchers to quickly create charts or graphs. Various statistical techniques can also be conducted with and between these data, such as chi-square or regression analysis. Open-ended questions on the other hand are much more

³ Gray and Guppy, 1999

⁴ Gray and Guppy, 1999

⁵ Walonick, 2004

⁶ Gillham, 2000

⁷ Gillham, 2000

subjective and labour-intensive, and typically involve qualitative analysis methods such as coding.⁸ The closed-ended approach is usually recommended for mail-in questionnaires.

1.2 Mail-out Questionnaire and POE

The intention behind using the mail-out questionnaire format in the POE setting was to reach the greatest number of randomly selected residents in the community. It is recognized as a standard proven method in evaluations and it can target a large sample at a relatively low cost.

Prior to being mailed out the questionnaire was pilot tested. After administering the pilot test to a range of participants who varied in age, income, gender, tenure and lifestyles, researchers discussed with the respondents and received their comments and criticisms on both content and format. Those questions that were seen as confusing or misleading by the respondents were modified.

Two rounds of mailings were issued. During the first round of mailings, 3500 questionnaires were mailed out to potential respondents on November 3, 2007, and respondents were asked to return the questionnaire by November 12, 2007. Due to printing delays, this did not allow for an adequate turn around time and we extended the date to November 19. For the second round of mailings, 500 questionnaires were sent out on November 30, 2007, with a requested return date of December 14, 2007. The second round of mailings was necessitated by a lower than anticipated response rate of the first round of mailings.

The questions asked in the questionnaire were of three types:

- closed ended (binary answers, multiple choice, and scale answers),
- short answer, and
- open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was seven pages in length and included the following themes:

- Dwelling Unit and Building,
- Parks, Plazas and Open Space,
- Shops, Services and Transportation,
- Families and Children,
- Experience of Living in False Creek North, and
- Demographic Information.

The self-completed questionnaire was estimated to take approximately twenty minutes and participation in the study was completely voluntary. A copy of the questionnaire is attached as Appendix A.

1.3 Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

A coding framework database of the 47 variables in the questionnaire was used as the basis for the statistical analysis. Statistical analysis software, Analyse-It®, was used to create frequency distributions of all variables measured. Over 200 cross-tabulations were executed between the variables in order to explore and examine relationships, correlations, and associations. As many of the relationships could only be measured at the nominal level, the Chi-squared statistic and its

⁸ Gillham, 2000

significance level (p-value) were used for each cross-tabulation. Relationships were accepted as significant when probabilities of 0.05 and less were obtained; they were rejected when the probabilities were higher than 0.05. In other words, a significant relationship between two variables meant that the probability of that association being due to random chance was less than 5 in 100. Whenever necessary, the cross-tabulations between two variables were performed controlling for other variables. All frequencies and performed and a summary of cross-tabulations performed are included as Appendices B and C.

Qualitative Analysis of Open-ended Questions

Six variables were measured explicitly through open-ended questions. The responses for each question were grouped according to their theme using a “lump-and-split” method of simple categorizing. For example, in one question respondents were asked what they would change about their unit. In order to analyze this question, responses were grouped according to room type (kitchen, bathrooms, balcony, etc.), and analyzed further to determine the type of change desired to the particular room.

2.0 Sampling Strategy and Participation Profile

Determining the appropriate sample size for questionnaires is particularly important to limit bias and self-selection of respondents. Unless there is a one hundred percent completion rate, there will be some unknown bias because the respondents may not be representative of the entire population. Bias can also be introduced during the processes of designing the questionnaire format and the questions themselves. The administration of the questionnaire may also introduce bias if the formatting is confusing, if questions are vague, poorly worded or contain technical jargon, if the questionnaire is too long (initiating “response fatigue”) and if the structure is flawed causing questions to be skipped.⁹ Questions with faulty scales and scale intervals are also bias laden and those that are leading, intrusive, and inconsistent are problematic.

Since response rates are so important to the reliability and validity of questionnaires, researchers often use techniques to stimulate response rates. Researchers have found that response rates can be improved by prior notice, follow-up, university sponsorship, user-friendly layout of surveys, personalization of cover letters, monetary incentives, inclusion of a return envelope and postage, anonymity and surveys fewer than four pages in length.¹⁰

In this cross-sectional self-completed survey questionnaire, subjects were determined by geographic location, specifically address, and restricted to those addresses in False Creek North. The boundaries for False Creek North were based on those delineated by the City of Vancouver, and corresponding with Concord Pacific’s development area (see Map 3.1.1 in Chapter III). Respondents must have been able to read English as well as tick boxes or circle answers on the questionnaire form, and may have had a friend or relative assist them with this. Respondents were also to be 18 years of age or older.

The questionnaires were anonymously addressed (i.e. to Owner/Occupant of unit #902) and were determined by a random sample. Each address in the complete database (of all addresses in False Creek North) were assigned a random number and sorted. In the first mailing, the 3500 entries with the highest assigned number were those chosen to be potential respondents. In the second mailing a similar process was used, but excluded those 3500 addresses which already received a questionnaire in the first round of mailings.

⁹ Choi and Pak, 2005

¹⁰ Fox et al., 1988; Yammarino et al., 1991; Sillis and Song, 2002; Doody et al., 2003

The FCN POE questionnaire was returned by a total of 497 respondents, for a 12.4% response rate. This equates to a 95 percent confidence level with a margin of error of +/- 4 percent.¹¹

2.1 Demographic Profile

The following table summarizes the demographic results of FCN households that completed the POE questionnaire compared to selected demographic profile from 2006 FCN Census Tract (9330059.03) data.

Table 5.1.1: Demographic profile comparison, mail-out questionnaire method

	FCN POE Survey, 2007	False Creek North
Male/Female split	44/56%	51/49%
Owner/Renter split	75/25	60/40
Average # of persons per household	1.9	1.9
Average # of bedrooms	1.8	1.6
English spoken at home	84%	72%
Income		
More than \$80,000	64%	37%
Less than \$20,000	5%	18%
Moved in the past 5 years	70%	80%

As Table 5.1.1 shows, the respondents of the FCN POE questionnaire were representative of the larger FCN population in terms of age, and household/bedroom size. The Survey respondents were also relatively representative in terms of mobility, with 70 percent of respondents having moved in the past 5 years, as compared to 80 percent of the larger FCN population.

However, the respondents of the questionnaire appear to be wealthier than the general residential population of FCN. There is a much higher percentage of owners among respondents, as well as a disproportionate income distribution. The respondents are wealthier than the general population, with 64 percent of households earning more than \$80,000 compared to 37 percent of the FCN population. Lower income residents are also less represented in the questionnaire. The survey over sampled English-speaking people; 84 percent of respondents spoke English at home, much higher than the 72 percent cited in the Census. This may have been because the survey was provided to respondents only in English, and may have discouraged many non-English speakers from completing it. A total of 31 languages were listed by the 497 respondents including Cantonese, Mandarin and Farsi as the most common.

A higher proportion of females returned the questionnaire than are present in the community.

As Figure 5.1.1 below shows, the two dominant age groups of respondents were 25-39, and 40-59. The mean age of respondents was 47 years old.

¹¹ As calculated by The Survey Systems website.

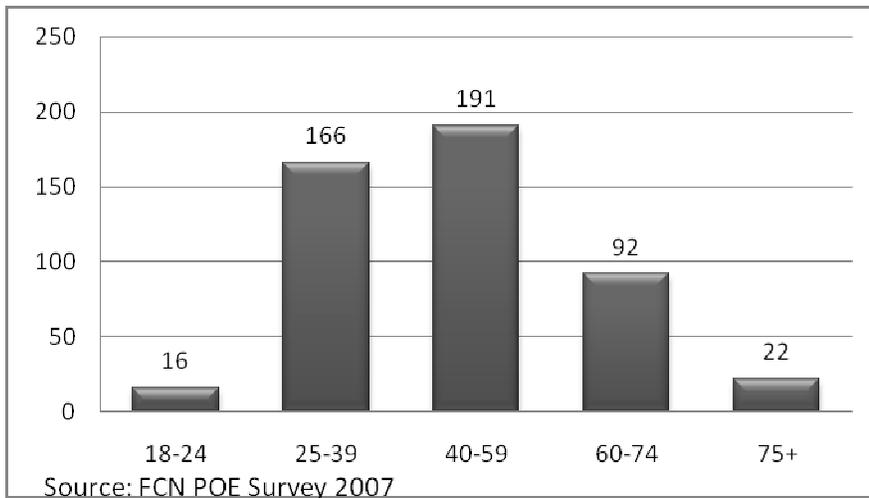


Figure 5.1.1: Age of respondents, mail-out questionnaire

When asked for the ages of all people in the respondent’s household, the results were similar, with those in the 25-39 and 40-59 age groups being the most numerous, as shown in Figure 5.1.2 below. Note the high number of children under the age of 5, which appears to drop suddenly for children in the older cohorts. This is consistent with the 2006 Census Data for Census Tract 9330059.03.

In all, 17 percent of respondents had children under the age of 12 years old, with no real difference between owners and renters.

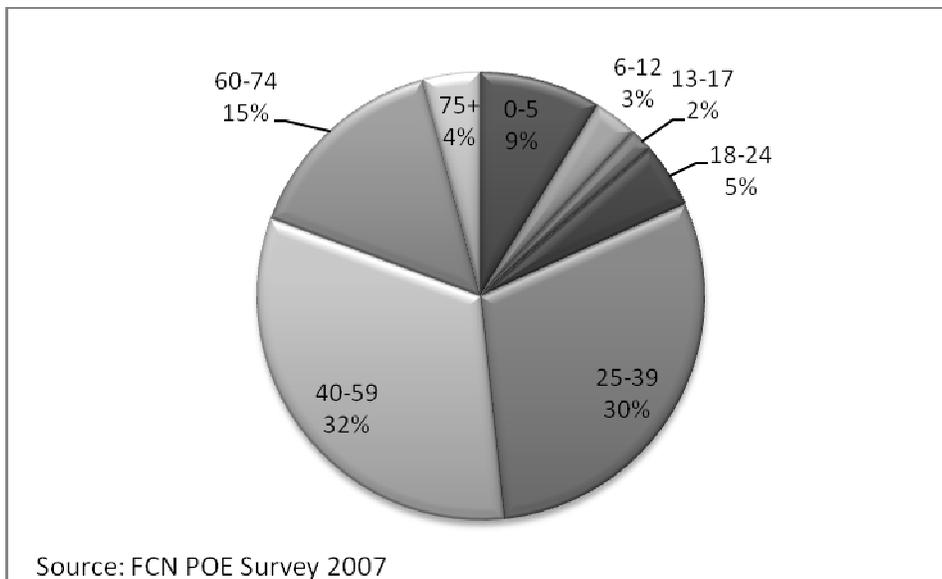


Figure 5.1.2: Age of all residents reported in the mail-out questionnaire

2.2 Unit and Neighbourhood Profile

A total of 95 percent of respondents indicated that the address to which the questionnaire was sent was their primary address. As shown in Table 5.1.2, 75 percent owned their unit, while 25 percent

rented. Those living in co-operative housing are included as owners and those living in social housing are included as renters.

Table 5.1.2: Type of tenure, mail-out questionnaire

DO YOU RENT OR OWN THIS DWELLING UNIT?		
	n	%
Rent from landlord	104	20.9%
Rent from family	10	2.0%
Social Housing	10	2.0%
TOTAL RENTERS		24.9%
Own with mortgage	206	41.4%
Own without mortgage	153	30.8%
Co-op	12	2.4%
TOTAL OWNERS		74.6%
Other	2	0.4%
TOTAL	497	100.0%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007		

Respondents were asked which Concord Pacific designated neighbourhood they reside in. In all, 35 percent indicated that they lived in the Roundhouse neighbourhood, 19 percent said the Beach neighbourhood, and 17 percent said they lived in the Yaletown Edge neighbourhood. A total of 16 percent indicated that they lived in “Other” neighbourhood, or they simply did not know. As the survey was only sent to addresses within Concord Pacific neighbourhood, indicating that one lived in “Other” neighbourhood is the same as not knowing. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether respondents actually lived in the neighbourhood that they indicated, as the addresses of respondents were anonymous. A person may believe that they live in the Roundhouse neighbourhood, when in fact they reside in the Quayside neighbourhood. Further research in the neighbourhood-identity phenomenon is recommended.

There was a wide range in the location of respondents’ previous dwellings. As shown in Figure 5.1.3, prior to (but not necessarily immediately prior to) moving to their current address, 137 respondents indicated that they had lived elsewhere in Vancouver, and 95 reported living in Downtown Vancouver (but outside of FCN). In all, 91 people said that had lived in Metro Vancouver (but outside of the city of Vancouver), while another 91 indicated that they had lived outside of Metro Vancouver, but still in Canada. A further 61 respondents reported living in False Creek North, and 52 said that they had lived outside of Canada before moving to FCN.

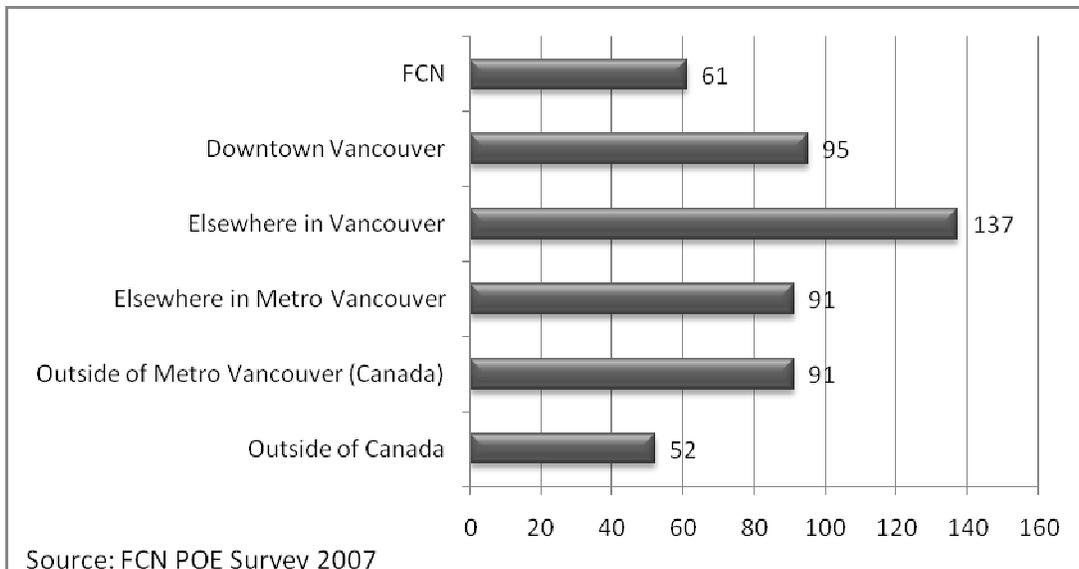


Figure 5.1.3: Previous areas of residence, mail-out questionnaire

The following list summarizes those other variables tested which were not found to have statistically significant relationships:

- Neighbourhood and Having children under the age of 12,
- Gender and Income,
- Gender and Having children under the age of 12,
- Tenure and Having children under the age of 12, and
- Tenure and Number of Occupants living in the dwelling.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Public Spaces: Parks, Plazas and Open Spaces

Public space, including parks, plazas and open spaces, generally received positive assessments. Public spaces were used by nearly every respondent, with all but 8 percent indicating that they visit the parks, plazas, and open spaces at least twice a month. About 37 percent indicated that they use these public spaces 2 to 4 times a week, and 28 percent reported daily use. A relationship was revealed between reported neighbourhood and number of park visits, with those who live in the Roundhouse or Beach neighbourhoods were most likely to visit the parks every day. Not surprisingly, these two neighbourhoods are closest to two of the major parks in FCN (David Lam and George Wainborn Parks, respectively). Those who reported living in the Beatty Mews neighbourhood (furthest from a park) were the most likely to “Rarely” or “Never” visit the public spaces. This is consistent with the findings in the literature, which reveals that people who can see a park or plaza from home or work tend to visit it comparatively frequently.¹²

¹² Dornbusch and Gelb, 1977

There was also a relationship between the type of unit (one, two, or three bedroom unit) and frequency of park visits. Those living in two and three bedroom units were more likely to visit the parks every day, while those living in one bedroom units were more likely to visit the park once a week or less often.

There was no correlation between tenure and frequency of park visits, nor income and frequency of park visits. This suggests that renters and owners, as well those in different income categories, are using the public space in relatively the same frequency.

Interestingly, there appears to be no relationship between gender and amount of use of public space in FCN. Although we know that in general males tend to use parks more than women, particularly for sports,¹³ FCN offers a variety of public spaces, notably the Seawall which appears to be relatively gender-neutral. Some academics argue that the ways women are expected to act, as well as concerns over safety can make the simple enjoyment of public space more difficult for women than men.¹⁴ The findings from the questionnaire indicate that this may not be the case in FCN.

The Seawall was the favourite outdoor space in FCN, with 42 percent indicating so. 23 percent reported that David Lam Park was their favourite location, particularly because of the soccer field and tennis courts. George Wainborn Park was listed by 17 percent, mostly dog-owners or walkers. The Roundhouse Plaza was the favourite of only 9 percent of respondents, which is somewhat surprising considering the centrality and historical importance of the Plaza in FCN.

Are Public Spaces Meeting Residents’ Needs?

Most respondents indicated that “parks, plazas and open spaces in FCN serve most of [their] outdoor recreational/leisure needs”. On a scale of 1-5, with 5 as needs “mostly” met, 74 percent indicated either a 4 or 5. Only eight percent reported a 1 or 2. However, male respondents indicated a lower level of satisfaction in this regard than female respondents. As shown in Table 5.1.3, 43 percent of women indicated 5/5, while 27 percent of men did the same. These findings are somewhat surprising as women have been found to be more discriminating about the public spaces they use, being found in large numbers only in very well design spaces.¹⁵

Table 5.1.3: Public space serving most outdoor needs (by gender), mail-out questionnaire

GENDER BY PUBLIC SPACE SERVING MOST OUTDOOR NEEDS							
	n/a	1 (Not at all)	2	3	4	5 (Mostly)	Total
Female	3	1	12	39	98	117	270
	1.1%	0.4%	4.4%	14.4%	36.3%	43.3%	100%
Male	1	4	20	45	88	59	217
	0.5%	1.8%	9.2%	20.7%	40.6%	27.2%	100%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007							

¹³ Krenichyn, 2003

¹⁴ see Bondi, 1998

¹⁵ Project for Public Spaces, 2007

A relationship was revealed between income and public space meeting the needs of respondents. Those who earned more generally thought that parks and outdoor space fulfilled most of their needs, while those who earned less were not as satisfied. However, there was no relationship found between age and public space meeting residents' needs. It appears that residents across the age spectrum find that the public space in FCN meets their leisure and recreational needs similarly. There was also no relationship between the type of unit a respondent lived in and satisfaction with public spaces. Intuitively, one might think that those living in smaller units would need to 'escape' from their smaller units more often than those who live in larger, more spacious units, but this does not seem to be the case in FCN.

As shown in Table 5.1.4, when asked, "What could be changed to better serve your recreation and/or leisure needs?", most responded with "No Changes". However, there also appears to be a strong desire for greater amenities for relaxation, such as benches and picnic space. In all, 16 percent responded with "Other", which were primarily more space for dogs, and changes to administration and maintenance of the parks. Only seven percent indicated that more recreational activities for children were desired, perhaps illustrating the tension over the joint use playing field at David Lam Park. As one respondent said,

"The children from this school [Elsie Roy] should not be allowed to destroy a valuable asset of Vancouver. The school has a play area, gym and two areas outside with swings etc to play. Get these children... off of the field area!"

This comment was echoed by another respondent who wrote,

"Letting the kids from school and daycare use this park for play area is wrong! They have designated areas at school and daycare to play. I have watched these kids dig holes in the field... Keep the kids off the field!"

These comments are consistent with previous findings that the shared use of David Lam Park is a source of contention for many members of FCN, particularly for adults.¹⁶

¹⁶ Mousseau, 2007

Table 5.1.4: “What could be changed to better serve your recreational/ leisure needs?”, mail-out questionnaire

WHAT COULD BE CHANGED TO BETTER SERVE YOUR RECREATIONAL/ LEISURE NEEDS?		
	n	%
No changes	170	26.1%
More amenities for relaxation	162	24.9%
Other	103	15.8%
More recreational activities for adults	94	14.4%
More park or open space	78	12.0%
More recreational activities for children	44	6.8%
TOTAL	651	100.0%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007		

Families and Public Spaces

Those with children under the age of 12 were generally less satisfied with the public space in FCN than those without children. Not surprisingly, families with children were more likely to visit the parks and public spaces at a greater frequency than those without children. Parents¹⁷ generally rated their satisfaction levels lower than non-parents. Respondents with children were asked to rate overall satisfaction levels with children’s play spaces in the outdoor parks, plazas and open spaces in FCN. The amount of play space, as well as the access to that play space received higher satisfaction levels than the variety and safety of the play space. There did not appear to be a relationship between the gender of the respondent and outdoor play space satisfaction levels.

The following list summarizes those other variables tested which were not found to have statistically significant relationships:

- Age of respondent and satisfaction of outdoor building play space,
- Having children and public spaces meeting the needs of the respondent,
- Length of residency and satisfaction of the amount of outdoor play space,
- Length of residency and public spaces meeting the needs of the respondent,
- Neighbourhood and satisfaction of the access to outdoor play space,
- Number of vehicles and number of visits to park, plazas or open space, and
- Number of vehicles and satisfaction of the access to outdoor play space.

¹⁷ In this report, “parents” and “families” refer to those with children under the age of 12, while acknowledging one can be parent and have children older than 12 years of age.

3.2 Movement and Transportation

Transportation Modes

Within FCN, the primary mode of transportation is walking. Over 90 percent of respondents indicated that this was their primary mode of travel. Seven percent said that the automobile was their main mode of travel within FCN. However, a majority of households own at least one vehicle, and a majority own at least one bicycle. Figure 5.1.4 shows vehicle and bicycle ownership by household. “Vehicle” includes cars, trucks and motorcycles.

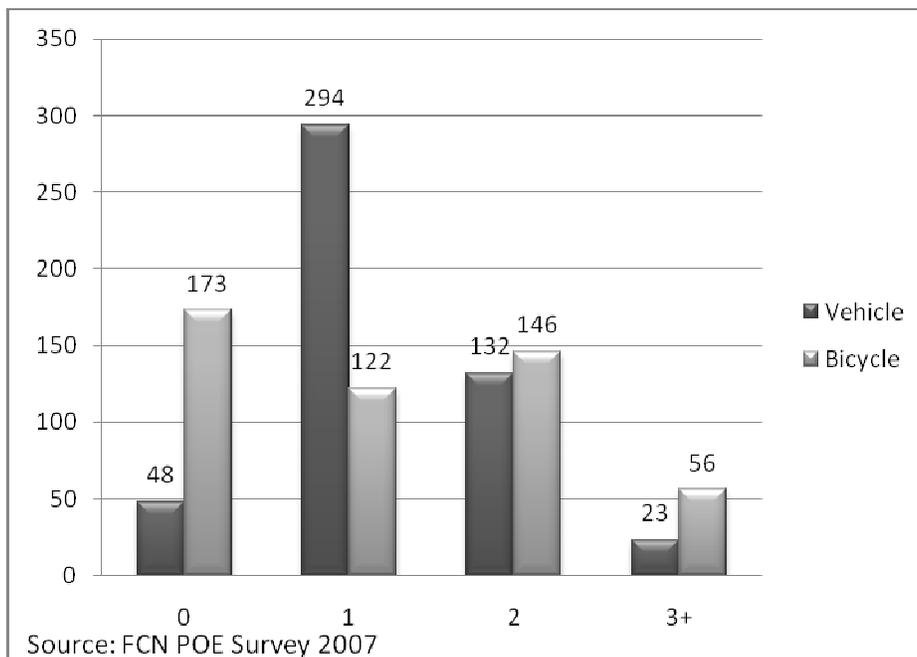


Figure 5.1.4: Vehicle and bicycle ownership, mail-out questionnaire

Bicycles were stored primarily in a common bicycle storage room provided in the building (78 percent). Eleven percent reported their bikes were stored mostly in their unit, while nearly no one (0.3 percent) indicated they stored their bicycle on the street.

A number of relationships related to vehicle ownership merit discussion. Those who had higher incomes were the most likely to own two or more vehicles, and those with the lowest income were most likely to not own any vehicles. Parallel to this relationship, those residing in two and three bedroom or larger units were most likely to have two or three vehicles, while those in one bedroom units reported the highest incidence of single vehicle ownership. In terms of gender and vehicle ownership, male respondents were more likely to live in households with two vehicles; female respondents were more likely to live in households with three or more vehicles, or with none at all. However, one should not place too much meaning on this finding as vehicle ownership was measured by household, not by only the person completing the questionnaire. Finally, a rather complicated relationship appears to exist between age and number of vehicles owned. Those aged 18-24, 40-59, and 75+ were most likely to not own a vehicle. However, respondents aged 40-59 were also most likely to own three or more vehicles. Of those in the 25-39 category, 92 percent owned one or two cars, which was much higher than any other age group.

Employment and Transportation

To gauge the level of home-based businesses, respondents were asked if any adult residents work primarily from their dwelling unit. Of 478 responses, 12 percent indicated that they did work from inside their unit, while 62 percent worked from outside the unit and 27 percent reported that they did not work.¹⁸ For those adults who worked outside of the unit, the most common regular mode of travel to work was the automobile. A total of 46 percent indicated that the car was their primary mode, 30 percent indicated walking, 8 percent reported transit and only 1.5 percent said that cycling was the main way they travelled to work. One can assume that nearly all of those who walk to work are employed in the Central Business District, although some of those who drive, cycle, or take transit may also work in the metropolitan core.

High density living in FCN, near to the region's main conglomeration of employment appears to encourage people to walk to work, but does not seem to encourage people to live without a vehicle (as 90 percent of households own one or more vehicles). Interestingly, although 65 percent of respondents reported owning at least one bike, only 1.5 percent indicated that this was their primary mode of travel to work.

For most families, mobility did not present a challenge to raising a family in FCN. Only 15 percent indicated that mobility was a challenge.

The construction of the new Canada Line Skytrain station at Pacific Boulevard and Davie Street is a source of contention among respondents.¹⁹ Many respondents were pleased and excited about being close to the Skytrain and the mobility and convenience that it would provide. However, others were concerned that the Skytrain will increase the number of people in the neighbourhood, facilitate crime, result in more homeless people, and cause deterioration in the character of the neighbourhood.

The following list summarizes those other variables tested which were not found to have statistically significant relationships:

- Having children and Number of vehicles owned by the household,
- Length of residency and Number of vehicles owned by the household,
- Neighbourhood and Number of vehicles owned by the household,
- Number of vehicles owned and Mobility as a challenge to raising a family,
- Number of vehicles owned and Satisfaction with resident parking, and
- Unit type and Traveling beyond a 10 minute walk to meet day-to-day needs.

¹⁸ There were concerns from the researchers, data enterer, and data analyzer that this question was not interpreted as it was intended. A comparatively high number of respondents did not follow directions on this question correctly, wrote comments when none were asked for, or simply skipped this question entirely. As a result, any findings or correlations with this variable may not be accurate.

¹⁹ At the time of surveying, FCN did not have rapid transit, such as Skytrain. However, an underground Canada Line Station is being constructed and is set to be completed and operational by late 2009 to early 2010.

3.3 Facilities and Services

FCN as a Complete Community

When asked, “In a typical week, do you travel beyond a 10 minute walk to meet day-to-day shopping needs (including groceries, pharmacy, dry cleaning, pet services, liquor, etc.)?”, 61 percent indicated “Yes”, while 31 percent reported “No”. Figure 5.1.5 summarizes why respondents indicated they travel beyond a 10-minute walk. This figure shows that there isn’t a single dominant reason why people choose to travel beyond a 10-minute walk. However the large percentage of people who do travel beyond a 10-minute may indicate gaps in the shops and services available in the FCN community. Affordability of shops, particularly groceries, was commented on often by respondents.

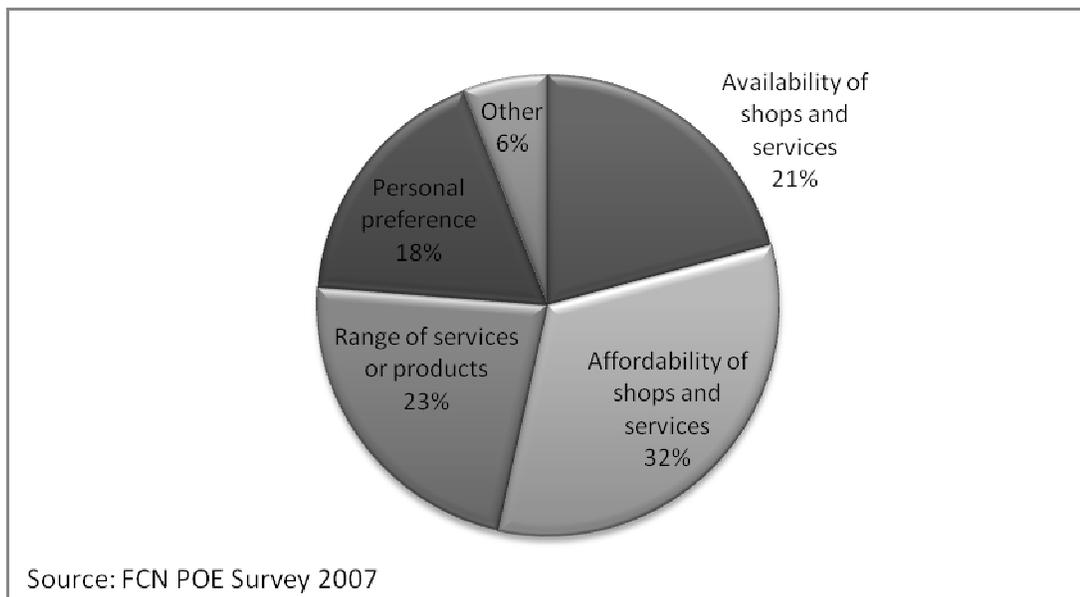


Figure 5.1.5: “Why do you travel beyond a 10-minute walk?”, mail-out questionnaire

A statistically significant relationship was found between Age and Travelling beyond a 10-minute walk for day-to-day needs. As shown in Table 5.1.5, respondents age 18-39 were least likely to do so, as were those 75 and older. Those respondents in the age range of 40-74 were more likely to travel beyond a 10-minute walk, particularly those between 60 and 74. This group may be the most likely to travel beyond a 10-minute walk, as some in this cohort are likely to be retired (with more free time or on a fixed income), but are still physically fit enough to walk, as compared to many in the 75 years and older group.

Table 5.1.5: “Do You Travel Beyond a 10-Minute Walk to Meet Your Day-To-Day Needs?” (by age), mail-out questionnaire

DO YOU TRAVEL BEYOND A 10-MINUTE WALK FOR DAY-TO-DAY NEEDS?			
Age	Yes	No	Total
18-24	5	11	16
	31%	69%	100%
25-39	91	75	166
	55%	45%	100%
40-59	121	66	187
	65%	35%	100%
60-74	65	27	92
	71%	29%	100%
75+	12	10	22
	55%	45%	100%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007			

Interestingly, walking beyond the FCN community to meet day-to-day needs was not found to be related to having children under the age of 12, the neighbourhood in which a resident reported they lived, the number of vehicles owned by the respondent’s household, or gender. It was also not related to tenure or income; owners (and high-income earners) were just as likely to shop outside of the community as were renters (and low-income earners). This is surprising, as experts generally believe that goods and services (particularly groceries) were too expensive for many low-income families.²⁰

Families, Shops, Services and Facilities

Families were asked whether a number of variables presented a challenge to raising a family in FCN. “Access to public amenities” was not a particular challenge; 16 percent of respondents with children indicated it was a challenge, while 84 indicated it was not. Responses to the question about “Access to local facilities and services” revealed a similar yes/no split of 15 and 85 percent. Many respondents reported very favourable comments regarding the amenities, facilities, and services provided in FCN. However, “School/daycare” was perceived as a challenge by 53% of respondents with children, and received a number of negative comments. Elsie Roy Elementary has operated at capacity since it opened in 2004, and is now over capacity. The waitlist for childcare centres in the area is now close to 1800.²¹ Concerns with school and daycare were not correlated with length of residency, the neighbourhood respondents reported they lived in, income, or tenure. The capacity issues at Elsie Roy Elementary appear to affect all demographic groups equally.

²⁰ Sarkissian, pers.comm., 2007

²¹ City of Vancouver, 2007

3.4 Community Safety

General Safety

Respondents reported high levels of perceived safety in FCN. Respondents were asked to rate how safe they felt in their unit, their building, and in the FCN community. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “Very unsafe” and 5 being “Very safe”, respondents accorded the dwelling unit a mean rating of 4.7, the building a 4.4, and the FCN community was rated slightly lower with a 4.1. We can surmise from this that residents feel extremely safe in their unit, and simply just “safe” in the community as a whole. These levels of perceived safety are much higher than in many other inner city neighbourhoods and should be recognized as an achievement.

Generally, most segments of society felt safe, including those in the various neighbourhoods. Older people did not feel any less safe than other groups, nor did those in households with children. There was also no statistically significant relationship between how long a respondent had lived in their current dwelling and how safe they felt in either their building or the FCN community. Interestingly, there was neither a statistically significant relationship between gender and safety in the FCN community, nor between gender and safety in the public realm during the day or at night. Although many studies have indicated that females have greater safety fears than males,²² this doesn’t seem to be the case in FCN. Some women, responding to open-ended questions did indicate general concerns for their safety as they were female, including one respondent who wrote, “I am a petite middle-aged woman, safety is not a concern in this neighbourhood, but is an important part/aspect of quality of life.” However, comments such as these were rare and did not constitute a significant reported concern.

However, a relationship did exist between income and safety in the respondent’s building. As shown in Table 5.1.6 below, those earning \$80,000 or more indicated a higher level of perceived safety than those earning less than \$80,000. The difference is particularly noticeably for those who earn less than \$20,000; 16% felt “unsafe” in the building, compared to 3% of those earning \$80,000 or more. At the other end of the spectrum, of those earning less than \$20,000 annually, 64 percent felt “safe” or “very safe”, while 94 percent of those earning \$80,000 or more felt the same. Although there may be a variety of reasons why this is the case, one could argue that higher income earners are more likely to live in buildings with greater security measures, such as a concierge, security patrols, alarm systems, and secure entry measures such as key fobs. Such measures have been found in past studies to deter crime and promote a greater of security among residents of the particular building.²³ However, one should not interpret this discrepancy as a major problem, as this table also shows that a strong majority of respondents across all income levels reported feeling “safe” or “very safe”.

²² Day, 2001; Madge, 1997; Stanko, 1995

²³ New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 2005, Parts I and II; Kitchen & Schneider, 2002

Table 5.1.6: “How safe do you feel in your building?” (by income), mail-out questionnaire

HOW SAFE DO YOU FEEL IN YOUR BUILDING?					
n= 470					
Level of Safety					
Income	Unsafe	Neutral	Safe	Very Safe	Total
Less than 20K	4	5	7	9	25
	16.0%	20.0%	28.0%	36.0%	100%
20k-50k	5	5	21	30	61
	8.2%	8.2%	34.4%	49.2%	100%
50k-80k	2	7	29	46	84
	2.4%	8.3%	34.5%	54.8%	100%
80k or more	9	9	101	181	300
	3.0%	3.0%	33.7%	60.3%	100%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007					

Respondents were asked how safe they feel using the parks, plazas and open spaces in FCN during the day and at nighttime. As shown in Figure 5.1.6, respondents generally felt safe both during the day and night, although a greater number of respondents felt “unsafe” at night time than during the day. However, the number of respondents who indicated they felt “unsafe” is very low compared to those who felt “safe” or “very safe”. While it is intuitively the case with safety that a person feels less safe at night than during the day, one possible explanation could be a concern about lighting. When asked why they did not feel safe using the public spaces, 26 respondents provided comments regarding lighting – respondents felt that outdoor space in the parks and Seawall was generally too dark and people felt uncomfortable with this. As one respondent indicated, there is “inadequate lighting, especially along the Seawall and Wainborn Park”.

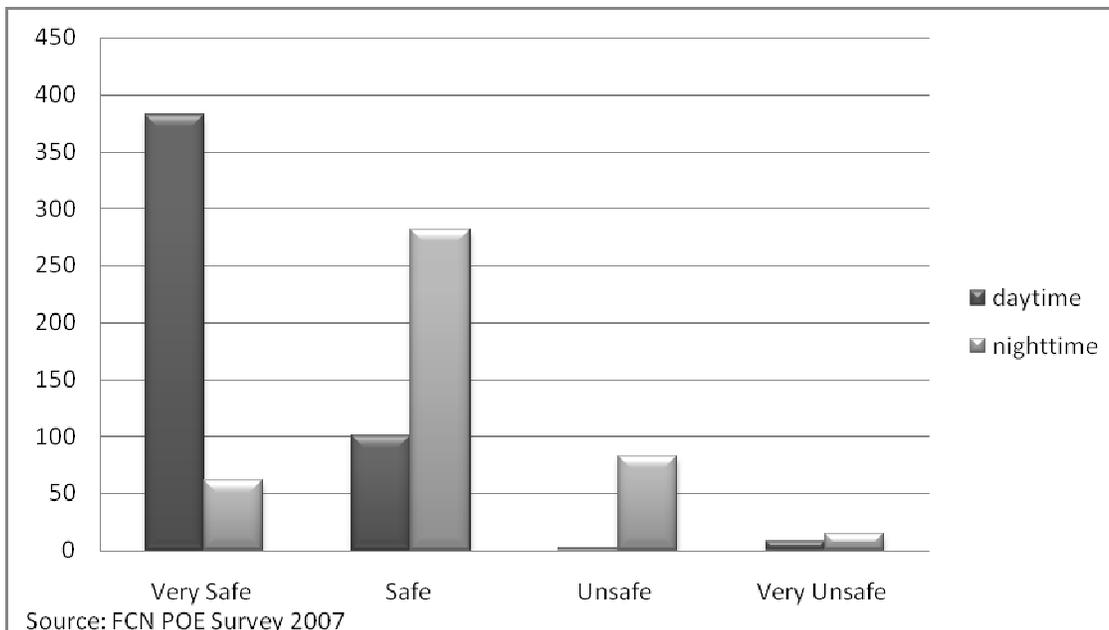


Figure 5.1.6: “How safe do you feel in the public spaces in the following times?”, mail-out questionnaire

Consistent with the above relationship between income and safety in one’s building, was a correlation between income and outdoor safety during the daytime. Those earning \$80,000 or more were more likely to indicate they felt “very safe” during the daytime (82%), while those earning \$50,000 or less were less likely to do so (68%). Of the latter group, those earning less than \$20,000 were even more unlikely to indicate feeling “very safe” (50%). However, the majority of each group felt safe, and no income group felt particularly “unsafe”. There was not a significant correlation between income and perceptions of safety at night time.

Of those respondents who did express concern for their general safety, 15 mentioned dogs – specifically off-leash, aggressive, or otherwise dangerous dogs. A number of concerns were also expressed about past criminal incidences, particularly car break-ins and vandalism. A few other respondents indicated that a lack of police presence, and drunken teens presented a risk. However, the dominant safety concern, reported by 82 respondents, was homeless people and drug users. Aggressive panhandling and being a witness to drug deals were a major concern for residents.

While these are concerns, they are common in a large city like Vancouver. When interpreting these results, one must remember that the majority respondents (72 percent) did not list any safety concerns at all.

Families and Safety

Respondents with children under 12 were asked if safety presented a challenge to raising a family in FCN. In all, 28 percent indicated that safety was a challenge, and 72 percent indicated it was not. Interestingly, there is a weak correlation between gender and safety as a challenge to raising a family.²⁴ As shown in Table 5.1.7 below, men were slightly more likely to indicate that “safety” was a challenge to raising a family than women.

Table 5.1.7: “Does safety present a challenge to raising a family?”, mail-out questionnaire

DOES SAFETY PRESENT A CHALLENGE TO RAISING A FAMILY?			
n=83			
	Yes	No	Total
Female	10	38	48
	20.8%	79.2%	100%
Male	13	22	35
	37.1%	62.9%	100%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007			

When asked what safety concerns parents had, a number of parents commented on concern for their child’s safety from off-leash dogs, as well as from drug paraphernalia. As one respondent wrote,

²⁴ The correlation did not meet statistically significant threshold of 0.05, nor secondary threshold of 0.1. This correlation had a p value of 0.01011.

“There has been vandalizing of the playgrounds- parents found drug needles in children’s sandbox.” However, most parents did not mention specific safety concerns for their children.

The following list summarizes those other variables tested which were not found to have statistically significant relationships:

- Income and Safety as a challenge to raising a family,
- Having children under 12 and Safety at night time,
- Length of residency and Safety at night time,
- Neighbourhood and Safety in the building,
- Number of vehicles and safety at night time,
- Gender and Safety in the building,
- Tenure and Safety in FCN community, and
- Unit type and Safety in unit.

3.5 The Building

General Satisfaction

Respondents were asked to rate their overall satisfaction with a variety of aspects of their building on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being “Very satisfied” and 1 being “Very dissatisfied”. Figure 5.1.7 below shows the mean values given to each building aspect or quality. Most qualities assessed received very favourable ratings, particularly amenities, outdoor open space, and resident parking. However, visitor parking received a much lower rating than any other aspect of the building. A larger number of respondents (24 percent) were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with the visitor parking provided in their building. When asked to comment on building satisfaction, 46 respondents commented on lack of availability of visitor parking, cumbersome or draconian parking policies, or no visitor parking at all. Some of the comments included:

- *It is a major pain to use visitor parking. You have to go outside, meet your guests and escort them to their spot through the garage. Three buildings share this parking area.*
- *[There] doesn’t ever appear to be enough visitor parking, especially during a Lions or Canucks game. Are people using our parking (friends of people in the building) during events?*
- *I don’t know how the City allowed the developer to allocate less than 20 visitor parking spaces for two towers of residence.*
- *Not enough visitor parking.*
- *There’s not enough space. There are about 10 visitors parking and 3 of them are reserved for handicapped—I’ve never seen anyone park there.*
- *[I] would like to have a different system for guest parking. [It’s] too hard now to go and get a pass each time for guests. I think residents should be able to call security and book out a space or tell them which guest space number is being used.*

The availability of visitor parking appears to be an issue particularly at “peak periods” such as weekend evenings or when events are going on elsewhere in Downtown Vancouver.

There were also comments about resident parking, which generally received high satisfaction levels, particularly regarding the size of the parking spot which was seen by some as too small. This was particularly the case for lower income earners (less than \$50,000), who had higher levels of dissatisfaction with resident parking in their building than other income groups.

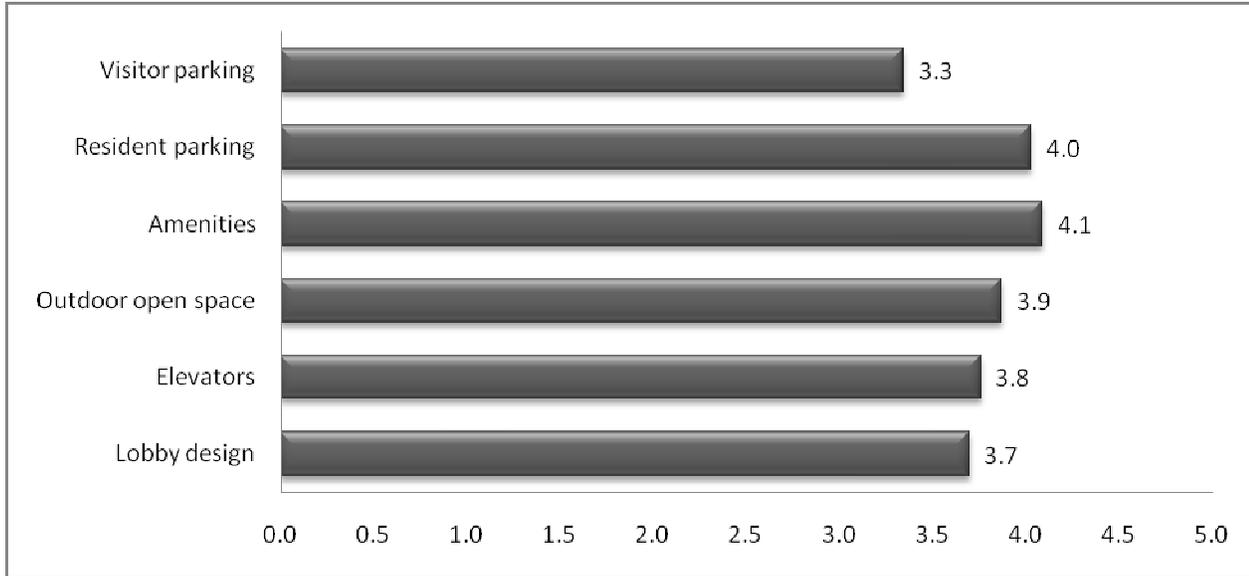


Figure 5.1.7: Overall satisfaction with building features, mail-out questionnaire

Figure 5.1.7 also shows that lobby design was rated slightly lower than other aspects of the building. Ten people commented on poorly designed, boring or otherwise uninteresting lobby entrances. A number of people commented that Concord’s older buildings have more impressive lobbies than their newer ones, and that the new ones cause poor first impressions.

The study revealed criticism of availability and number of elevators. Although many respondents were very satisfied with the provision of elevators in their building, nearly 15 percent indicated that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their elevators. Those who were critical of their elevators generally lived in 20-30 story towers with 2 elevators, which were seen as insufficient. Comments included:

- *2 elevators for 25 floors is insufficient.*
- *Elevator programming is very inefficient and frustrating.*
- *How can a 30+ floor [building] only have 2 elevators- unacceptable.*
- *Our building somehow falls within the 1 elevator bylaw– [this is] seriously ridiculous when people move in or renovate the condos every week. Should be required to have 2 elevators.*
- *2 elevators in a building of this size is not practical or safe.*

Amenities were given the highest satisfaction rating, although amenities were also criticized by some respondents, notably because exercise machines break down and general lack of availability of

machines. There was a similar relationship between income and satisfaction with building amenities. Those earning less than \$20,000 indicated the highest level of dissatisfaction with building amenities (40 percent), which may be because many of those in this income bracket live in buildings lacking the amenities offered in some of the more expensive residential complexes and buildings. There was no relationship between gender and building amenity satisfaction, or between age and amenity satisfaction. This is consistent with experts' opinions that amenities provided in FCN buildings serve the needs of males and females, as well as those of varying ages of adulthood.²⁵

Length of residency was correlated with satisfaction with building amenities (such as exercise machines, pools, or meeting rooms). In this relationship, those who had lived at their current address for fewer than 12 months had the highest levels of satisfaction, while those who had lived for 5 years or more had the lowest levels of satisfaction. This relationship was not linear and cannot be interpolated for those who had lived at their dwelling for between one and five years. However, length of residency did not share a relationship between elevator, lobby design, outdoor space, or resident parking satisfaction levels.

Families and Building Satisfaction

Those with children were generally more critical of their buildings than those without children. When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with children's play space within the unit and building (on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "very satisfied"), parents were relatively neutral or dissatisfied. "Safety" of play space was rated a 3.2; "amount" of play space received a 3.1; and "variety" of play space received a 2.7. This could be explained as many buildings have been constructed without the provision of dedicated children's play space. This is important to highlight as children's play areas have been found to be integral in the early and middle childhood years to a child's psychological and physical development.²⁶

Those with children were also less satisfied with building amenities than those without children. About 4 percent of respondents without children were "very dissatisfied", compared to 10 percent of those with children.²⁷ Respondents with children were also less likely to be "very satisfied" with resident parking. In all, 42 percent of those without children reported being "very satisfied", compared to 24 percent of those with children. Further, parents rated their satisfaction levels with their building's outdoor open space higher than those who did not have children. However, there was no relationship between having children less than 12 years of age and the level of satisfaction with elevators in one's building. What may be important to conclude from these findings is that buildings in their current design may work better for those without children than for those who do have young children. This is consistent with other researchers' findings.²⁸

The following list summarizes those other variables tested which were not found to have statistically significant relationships:

- Age and Elevator satisfaction,
- Age and Lobby design satisfaction,
- Income and Elevator satisfaction,
- Gender and Lobby design satisfaction,
- Number of vehicles and Visitor parking satisfaction,

²⁵ Sarkissian, pers. comm., 2007

²⁶ Hume, Salmon, & Ball, 2005

²⁷ This cross-tabulation received a p-value of 0.0538, slightly above our statistical significance threshold.

²⁸ Sarkissian & Kerr, 2003

- Neighbourhood and Lobby design satisfaction,
- Unit type and Resident Parking satisfaction, and
- Unit type and Visitor parking satisfaction.

3.6 The Unit

Satisfaction with Unit Layout

Thirty percent of respondents lived in a one bedroom or studio suite, 56 percent in a two-bedroom unit and 14 percent in a three bedroom or larger unit.

As shown in Figure 5.1.8, satisfaction levels with the design and layout varied across the features of respondents’ units. Overall, the unit design received a “relatively satisfied” rating of 4.1, similar to satisfaction levels with the living room, master bedroom and bathroom(s). However, aspects of the unit including in-suite storage and balcony or outdoor space received lower ratings of 3.5.

Those respondents who lived in three bedroom or larger units had the highest levels of dissatisfaction with the layout of their overall unit, perhaps reflecting greater expectations. This relationship is similar to the relationship with living room satisfaction, in which those in three bedroom or larger units were the most likely to indicate being “very dissatisfied” with the layout and design of their living room.²⁹ There was no significant relationship between unit type and the satisfaction of additional bedroom(s), bathroom(s), in-suite storage, or outdoor space layout and designs. Nor did a statistically significant relationship exist between overall layout satisfaction and age, gender, income or length of residency.

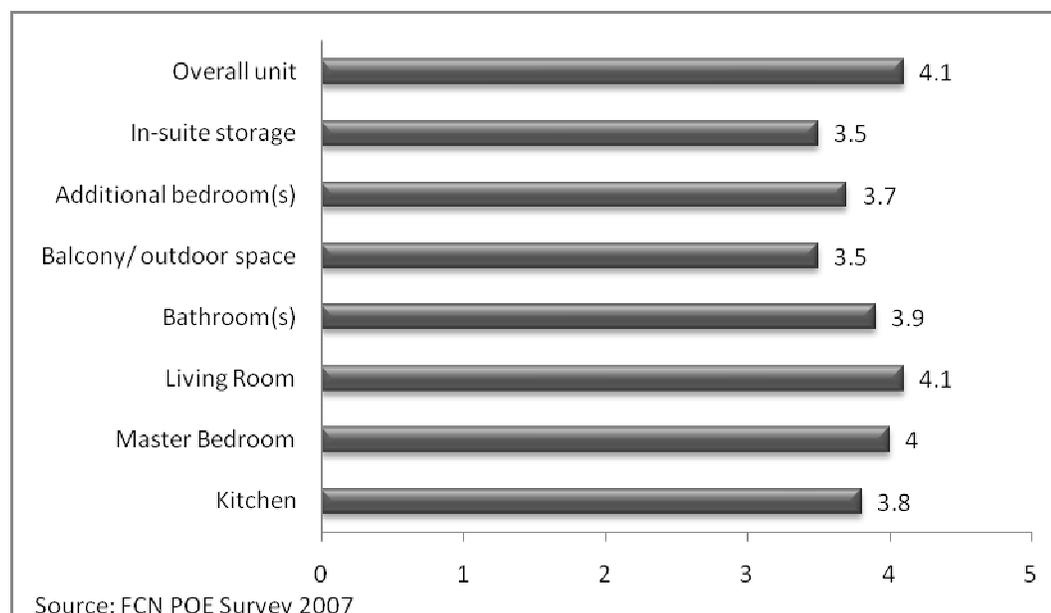


Figure 5.1.8: Satisfaction with unit design features, mail-out questionnaire

²⁹ This relationship had a p-value of 0.0502, which technically does not meet our threshold of 0.05.

There was also a strong relationship between kitchen design satisfaction and number of bedrooms. Although kitchen satisfaction levels were quite high, larger suites, particularly those in three-bedroom or larger units, were the least satisfied with the design and layout of their kitchens. As Table 5.1.8 shows, nearly 20 percent of those in three-bedroom or larger units were dissatisfied with their kitchen, compared to about 7 percent and 12 percent of those in one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, respectively. There are at least three possible reasons to explain this phenomenon. The first is that residents in larger units may have higher expectations with regard to finishing and appliances. Larger units usually are sold by the developer with the same finishings as smaller units (unless upgrade packages are purchased). The second possible reason deals with size. Three-bedroom units are normally home to a greater number of people,³⁰ but kitchens may not always be designed to accommodate a greater number of people—the kitchen in a three-bedroom unit may only be 25 percent larger than a kitchen in a one bedroom unit, even though the larger kitchen may need to support the needs of more residents. It could also be that people in larger units expect a separation between the kitchen and living room, whereas those who live in smaller units accept the open living floor plan in which the kitchen and living rooms are adjacent and share space. Further research is recommended into this phenomenon.

Table 5.1.8: Satisfaction with unit design features (by unit type), mail-out questionnaire

RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF YOUR KITCHEN					
n= 493					
	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Total
One-bedroom	11	20	72	46	149
	7.4%	13.4%	48.3%	30.9%	100%
Two-bedroom	33	50	114	76	273
	12.1%	18.3%	41.8%	27.8%	100%
Three-bedroom or larger	14	19	24	14	71
	19.7%	26.8%	33.8%	19.7%	100%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007					

Respondents were asked, “What would you change about your unit, if anything?” Apart from a general desire for more overall space in the unit, the most common changes listed were regarding the kitchen. More cupboards and kitchen storage space was listed more than any other required change. People felt that balconies needed to be larger. Enclosed balconies were oftentimes described as “wasted space”. Respondents also expressed concern about a lack of general storage in their unit, with about 20 percent indicating that storage was a challenge. Some respondents also wanted larger bedrooms, larger bathrooms (with better quality fixtures), as well as air conditioning or at least improved ventilation. Air conditioning was requested primarily by those living in south-facing suites. The following comments represent many of the changes requested by respondents:

³⁰ The result of the survey reveal a positive correlation between size of a unit and number of full-time residents in that unit.

- *More openable windows for air circulation.*
- *Greater cupboard space in kitchen.*
- *Better quality products and fixtures instead of cheap fixtures that break easily.*
- *More closet space would be nice.*
- *Straight (right angle) walls would make my suite feel 30 percent bigger.*
- *Add linen closets!*
- *9 foot ceilings make the suite feel so much bigger.*

In-suite Storage, Enclosed Balconies, and Second Bedroom Usage

Some units have an in-suite storage area, typically a small, windowless room of about 40 square feet. A majority of residents indicated that this space was used primarily for storage (67 percent), while 9 percent used this space for a den or office, and 6 percent were used for a pantry. Often storage rooms were used for dual purposes, such as pantry storage and general storage, or laundry and storage.

Enclosed balconies were reported as being used for a range of purposes, primarily typical balcony uses (such as plants or casual seating) (47 percent), as a den or office (31 percent), or as an eating area (6 percent). As mentioned earlier, enclosed balconies were cited by some respondents as wasted space. One respondent wrote, “Enclosed solarium [is] a waste!”, while another recommends that the enclosed balcony be removed and have that space allocated elsewhere in the dwelling.

Those residents in suites with two or more bedrooms were asked about the use of the additional bedroom. Figure 5.1.9 shows that 36 percent of respondents reported it was used as a guest bedroom, while an additional 25 percent said that it was used as a den or office. This finding may show us that many of the two- and three-bedroom units purchased in FCN are being under-utilized in terms of maximum occupancy, and that the neighbourhood has been designed for a greater population.

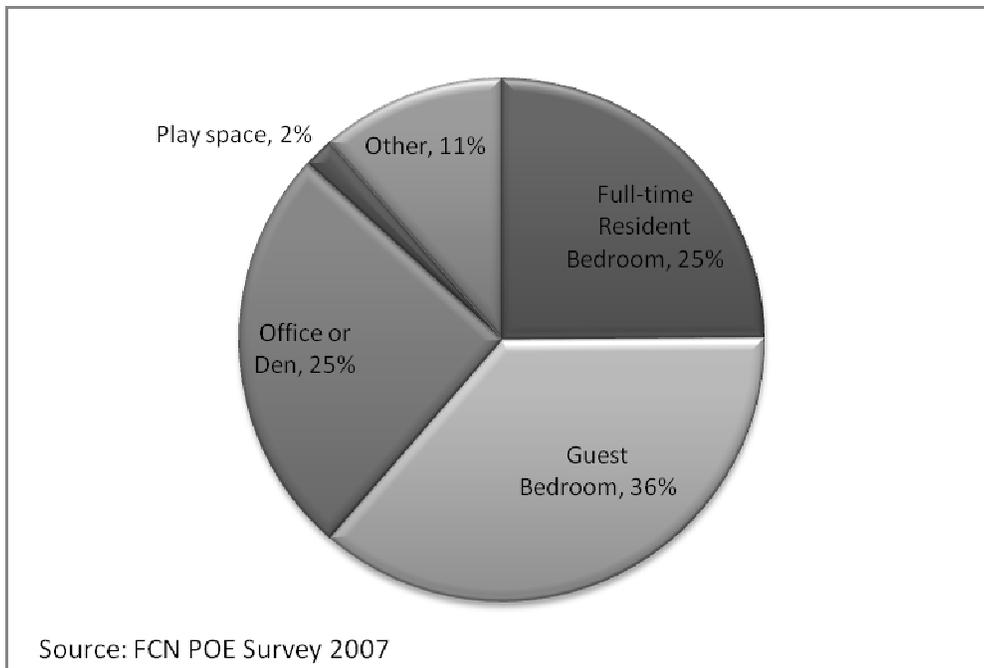


Figure 5.1.9: Additional bedroom uses, mail-out questionnaire

Families with Children and Unit Design

Consistent with the relationship between families and building satisfaction, families with children generally rated their satisfaction with the layout and design of their unit lower than families without children. Satisfaction with the layout and design of additional bedroom(s), bathroom(s), living room and kitchen were lower for those with children than those without.³¹ Table 5.1.9 shows the relationship between having children and kitchen layout satisfaction. Those who have children under 12 reported a higher level of dissatisfaction with their kitchen than those without children. This may be partly explained by the need of families for greater storage space within their kitchens, or perhaps by greater use of the kitchen than those without children. This is consistent with other researchers' findings.³² Those respondents with children were not significantly less satisfied with outdoor space, in-suite storage, master bedroom, or overall unit layout satisfaction. These findings may indicate that families with children are equally satisfied with the overall layout of their suite, but express dissatisfaction with particular rooms (as compared to those without children). During an interview, one expert confirmed this theory.³³

³¹ The correlation between having children and additional bedroom layout satisfaction had a p-value of 0.0809, which means although it does not meet our threshold of statistical significance, the relationship has a 92% likelihood of being accurate to reality.

³² Sarkissian and Kerr, 2003

³³ Sarkissian, pers. comm., 2007

Table 5.1.9: Unit design and layout satisfaction (by having children under the age of 12), mail-out questionnaire

RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF YOUR KITCHEN					
n= 493					
Children under 12	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Total
Yes	16	22	31	14	83
	19.3%	26.5%	37.3%	16.9%	100%
No	42	67	179	122	410
	10.2%	16.3%	43.7%	29.8%	100%
Source: FCN Poe Survey 2007					

In all, 68 percent of families indicated that adequate space in the dwelling unit presented a challenge to raising a family in FCN. Those families who had occupied their dwelling for the shortest amount of time (fewer than 12 months) were the least likely to indicate that adequate space was a challenge (38 percent indicated this), while those who had lived for between 1-5 years were the most likely to indicate that space presented a challenge (81 percent indicated this). One respondent wrote, “We simply do not have enough space and must move.”

Respondents with children were also asked, “Based on your current living situation, how satisfied are you with the ability of your dwelling unit to support your family’s evolving needs?” A mean value of 3.5 was given (with 1 being “very dissatisfied” and 5 being “very satisfied”). About half of respondents reported being “satisfied” with the ability of their unit to meet their changing needs. A number of respondents commented that their unit will not be able to meet the needs of their family, particularly as children get older, and thus they will be required to move. Families in larger units were no more likely to indicate lower satisfaction levels than families in smaller units, perhaps illustrating that adaptability was a potential problem regardless of the size of one’s dwelling unit.

The following list summarizes those other variables tested which were not found to have statistically significant relationships:

- Income and Adequate space in unit as a challenge to raising a family,
- Income and Satisfaction with the amount of play space in the unit/building,
- Income and Satisfaction with the safety of play space in the unit/building,
- Length of residency and Satisfaction with the amount of play space,
- Tenure and Living room layout satisfaction,
- Unit type and Adequate space as a challenge to raising a family,
- Unit type and Amount of play space in the unit/building, and
- Unit type and Variety of play space in the unit/building.

3.7 Decision Making

“My husband and I couldn't be happier living in the downtown core. The convenience is almost indescribable. We have absolutely everything the city has to offer at our fingertips. We essentially live across the street from BC place and GM Place so all concerts, sports events, and exhibitions are steps away. We can walk to the ballet at the Queen E. Theatre or the Symphony or a concert at the Orpheum. We walk the Yaletown Seawall EVERY night. I walk to work, and now that I have that luxury I will probably never choose to live far from work again. I could honestly go on and on. I love living downtown!” Female, age 29

Moving to FCN

Those living in smaller units (one-bedrooms and studios) were more likely to have lived in their current dwelling for less than three years, while those in two- and three- bedroom units were more likely to have lived for more than three years. Owners were also more likely than renters to have not moved in the past three years. Further, in general older respondents had lived at their address longer than younger respondents.

Respondents were asked what factors influenced their decision to move to FCN. As the quotation above demonstrates, convenience and location was a major reason why respondents moved to FCN. The most common factors related to location, particularly proximity to work. Many appreciated the appeal of walking to work and not having to commute. Proximity to amenities was also a common reason. In this instance, amenities refer to restaurants, theatre, parks, shopping, etc. FCN was also viewed as “convenient” and “liveable” by many respondents. A desire to live near the water, or have a water view was also expressed by many. Retirement or downsizing was listed by a number of respondents as a contributing “push” factor as well. One respondent wrote, “[We moved here because of] the excellent location- close to the water and parks. Walking distance to work. Vibrant, kid-friendly neighbourhood. Urban lifestyle.”

Respondents also reported a wide variety in the time in they have lived in their current dwelling. One-third (33 percent) have been at the same address for one to three years and slightly fewer (30 percent) for more than five years. About 20 percent have lived at their current dwelling for 3-5 years, while 17 percent indicated that they moved less than one year ago.

Moving from FCN

Respondents were asked how long they plan to live at their current address. Figure 5.1.10 shows that 32 percent definitely plan on moving with three years, while roughly an equal number (33 percent) indicate they will live reside at their current address for more than five years.

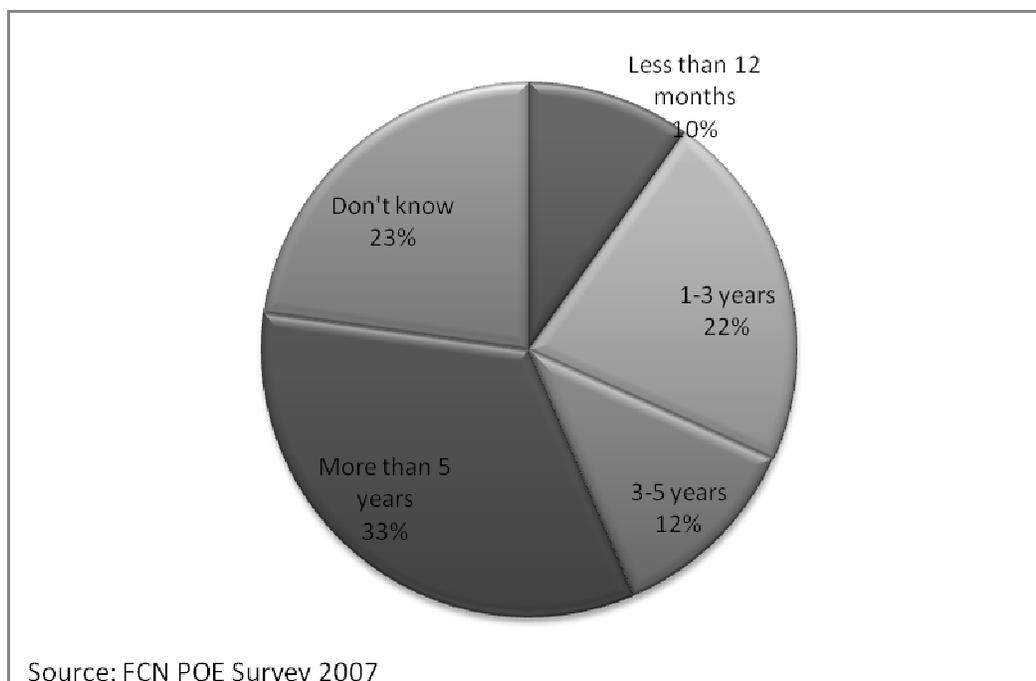


Figure 5.1.10: Length of future residency in FCN, mail-out questionnaire

Of those 98 respondents who indicated that they were definitely planning on moving, 27 percent intend to stay in FCN. This group represents people who are unable to live in their current unit, but enjoy FCN enough to stay in the neighbourhood. These people could include renters whose lease has reached its end of term, or families who enjoy high-density living but need to upgrade to a larger suite. In all, 24 percent indicate that they will move to a location elsewhere in Vancouver, while 18 indicated moving to one of Vancouver’s suburbs. About 20 percent of respondents were likely to leave Metro Vancouver (6 percent of who were planning to leave Canada).

Those who were definitely planning on moving were asked to explain their reasons. In all, 81 respondents provided a reason. The overwhelming reason was the need for more space/ lack of affordability of FCN. In all 41 people indicated that they desired a larger unit, but could not afford one in FCN. A total of 23 respondents also listed changes in their life as the primary reason they were leaving. These included job offers in other cities, retirement, or being forced to leave their rental unit as the owner is selling. Seven respondents indicated having children was the main reason, particularly related to space in the unit, and outdoor play space (they desired a back yard). Six respondents said that pollution/noise was the driving push factor, while two indicated that safety was their main concern. Only two others simply indicated that they did not like the neighbourhood.

A number of variables had statistically significant relationships with respondents’ length of proposed future residency. Age was one variable. Respondents in the younger age categories (18-24 and 25-39) were the most likely to move within three years, and the least likely to stay in their current residence for more than five years. Neighbourhood also shared a relationship: those who reported living in the Roundhouse and Beach neighbourhoods were the most likely to live in the current dwelling for more than five years. Those who said they lived in the Yaletown Edge neighbourhood were the least likely to do so. Owners were also more likely to stay in their unit for more than three years, while renters were much more likely to move within that time period. This is not surprising as

there is a higher vacancy rate in rented dwellings and more regular changing or turnover of tenancies than in owner-occupied.³⁴

Further, there was a relationship between how long a respondent had lived in their current dwelling, and how long they plan to live in that same dwelling. Generally, the longer a respondent has lived at their current address the longer they intended to stay there.

There was also a strong relationship between overall unit layout satisfaction and length of intended future residency. As shown in Table 5.1.10, those who were satisfied or very satisfied with the layout of their overall unit were much more likely to stay for three years or more, while those who reported lower levels of satisfaction indicated that they were more likely to move in the next three years.

Table 5.1.10: Unit design and layout satisfaction (by length of future residency), mail-out questionnaire

RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF YOUR OVERALL UNIT				
n= 366				
Length of future residency	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied or Very Satisfied	Total
Less than 12 months	1	10	36	47
	2.1%	21.3%	76.6%	100%
1 year to 3 years	5	20	78	103
	4.9%	19.4%	75.7%	100%
3 years to 5 years	2	4	49	55
	3.6%	7.3%	89.1%	100%
More than 5 years	2	10	149	161
	1.2%	6.2%	92.5%	100%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007				

Overall unit layout was the only layout and design variable to have a significant relationship with length of proposed future residency. In terms of the unit, bathroom, kitchen, living room, and master bedroom did not appear to be important factors in whether a respondent was more likely to move in the near future or not. In terms of building satisfaction levels, elevator, outdoor space, resident parking, and visitor parking were not likely to be factors that contributed to moving within the next three years. Further, perceptions of safety, both in the FCN community and in the public spaces at night time did not appear to play a significant role in determining whether or not one was intending to move in the next three years.

Families Moving from FCN

Families with children under the age of 12 were much more likely to move earlier than those without children. Table 5.1.11 shows that fewer than 27 percent of families with children intend to stay at

³⁴ Sarkissian, pers. comm., 2007

their current address for more than 5 years, compared for 48 percent of those without young children.

Table 5.1.11: Length of future residency (by having children under the age of 12), mail-out questionnaire

HOW LONG TO YOU PLAN TO LIVE AT THIS ADDRESS?					
n= 371					
Children?	Less than 12 months	1 year to 3 years	3 years to 5 years	More than 5 years	Total
Yes	14	26	10	18	68
	20.6%	38.2%	14.7%	26.5%	100%
No	33	78	47	145	303
	10.9%	25.7%	15.5%	47.9%	100%
Source: FCN POE Survey 2007					

There was a significant relationship between length of proposed future residency and a number of variables related to having children. This may help to further explain why families with children are intending to move sooner than those without children. The first is that inadequate space in the unit is a challenge to raising a family. Those respondents who indicated that space was a challenge were more likely to be planning to move in the next three years than those who did not indicate that space was a challenge. Respondents who were less satisfied with their unit’s ability to meet their changing family needs were also more likely to move within three years than those who had higher satisfaction levels with their unit. However, there was not a significant relationship between length of future residency and affordability or safety as a challenge to raising a family. In other words, those who indicated that affordability or safety presented a challenge to raising their family in FCN were no more likely to move than those who did not indicate that affordability or safety were challenges. Interestingly, those who reported that school or daycare presented a challenge to their family were no more likely to move than respondents who did not report that school or daycare was a problem. This is contrary to the opinion of many social planning experts who assert that lack of availability of school or daycare constitutes an adequate reason for moving from the neighbourhood.³⁵

The following list summarizes those other variables tested which were not found to have statistically significant relationships:

- Length of future residency and Number of vehicles,
- Length of future residency and Number of park visits,
- Length of future residency and Amount of outdoor play space,
- Unit type and Length of future residency,
- Length of residency and Affordability as a challenge to raising a family,
- Length of residency and Unit meeting changing needs of family,
- Gender and Length of future residency, and
- Kids and Moving to where?

³⁵ Sarkissian, pers. comm., 2008

4.0 Summary of Findings

The sample from the FCN survey was representative of the population in terms of household size and age, but tended to be wealthier by a considerable proportion. A larger proportion of English-speaking people also responded to the survey. According to the findings, a majority of people in FCN are between the ages of 25-59 and nearly three-quarters own their unit. Respondents had lived in a variety of locations prior to moving to their current dwelling, notably areas in Vancouver.

The following is a summary of the findings from the self-complete survey questionnaire:

Nearly all (96 percent) said that they would recommend living in FCN to others.

Public spaces, including parks, plazas and open spaces generally received high satisfaction levels from respondents. These spaces were used often by people from all demographic groups in the community. The Seawall was listed as the favourite outdoor space. Those with children under the age of 12, men, and lower income earners reported being less satisfied with public space than their respective counterparts. Although more relaxation amenities were desired, most people said that they would not change anything about the parks to serve their needs better.

Walking, driving, and cycling were all common modes of transportation in FCN, but for different purposes. Most (90 percent) respondents said they primarily walk within FCN. However fewer people (30 percent) reported walking to work as their main mode. About half of respondents drive to their place of employment. Nearly all households own at least one vehicle, and a majority own at least one bicycle. The construction of the future Skytrain Station at Pacific Boulevard and Davie Street was viewed by many as an amenity that will benefit the neighbourhood, but was also seen as a source of crime and noise.

In terms of services and facilities, FCN meets the needs of some respondents, but not a majority. Just over half of respondents reported walking beyond their neighbourhood to meet day-to-day needs. Reasons for doing so varied from affordability, to availability, to personal preference. Younger respondents were least likely to walk more than 10 minutes to meet their needs. Those with families generally reported few challenges with services and facilities, but about half indicated that school or daycare was a problem. Capacity issues at the local elementary school appear to affect all demographic groups equally.

Concerns about community safety were not reported to be a major problem in FCN. Respondents generally felt very safe in both indoor and outdoor space in FCN, and only slightly less safe at night time. Women felt no less safe than men, nor did perceptions of safety vary by age. There were a number of comments regarding the perceived threats posed from homeless people and drug users, as well as lighting in parks at night time. Families generally did not indicate that safety was a challenge.

Residents appeared quite satisfied with their building, but there was some dissatisfaction with several aspects of the building. Resident parking, and outdoor open space were viewed most positively, as were the amenities in more expensive (and newer) buildings. The biggest complaint was the lack of visitor parking. Uninteresting lobbies, too few elevators, and frequent break-down of exercise machines were also concerns among some residents. Complaints about elevators were most common in 20 to 30 story towers with only two elevators. Families with young children were slightly more critical than families without young children of their building, particularly in regards to indoor and outdoor play space.

Unit satisfaction levels varied widely, but respondents were generally satisfied with their overall unit. The master bedroom, living room, and bathrooms were given the highest satisfaction levels. Kitchen design and layout received lower ratings, particularly from families and those in larger units. In-suite storage was also a common problem, with many respondents indicating that there isn't enough storage space. Balcony and outdoor space were a problem as well—balconies were often seen as too small and un-usable. Enclosed balconies were sometimes perceived as wasted space that could be better used elsewhere, and second bedroom usage indicated a possible under-utilization of maximum occupancy within units. Families with children were much more critical of nearly every aspect of their unit than were those without young children.

Respondents move to FCN generally for the convenience and lifestyle, and move from FCN for space and affordability issues. Respondents reported a range of reasons why they moved to FCN, the most common being convenience and proximity to work or amenities. FCN was seen as “liveable” by many. Nearly half of respondents said that they will live at their current dwelling for at least three more years. Reasons for moving were due mostly to the limits of internal space and lack of affordability. Almost no respondents reported not enjoying FCN as a driving factor in their decision to move. Those who were least satisfied with the design of their unit were most likely to move sooner. Respondents with children were also likely to move in the next three years. Lack of internal space was cited as the main reason for doing so.

Appendix A - Questionnaire

Appendix B - Frequencies of responses

Appendix C - summary of cross-tabulations performed

Method 2: SPEAKOUT COMMUNITY EVENT

1.0 Setting and Procedure

1.1 The SpeakOut Model

The SpeakOut is a specific method of community consultation designed to create a safe, welcoming and energetic environment through which all participants feel comfortable voicing their ideas. It is used to provide an informal and interactive “public meeting” environment where a wide range of people have a chance to participate. It works well where specific community feedback or input is sought from a wide spectrum of the community. When done well, it can be a lively and colourful event that captures people’s attention and imagination. Embodiment is another guiding characteristic of the SpeakOut method. Practitioners working with consultative methods are increasingly recognizing that community members tend to participate more openly and energetically when they are able to engage not only their minds, but also their hands, bodies and creative energies. A mix of methods provides hands-on and visual aids that help to engage a variety of learning styles. (The specific embodied activities used in False Creek North are outlined with their respective categories in Table 5.2.1).

Broad categories with questions and photographs act as initial prompts for discussion. A listener solicits more information by asking open-ended, non-judgmental questions and by listening carefully to the participant. Meanwhile, a recorder writes the participants thoughts almost verbatim, thereby avoiding his or her biases and maintaining the full meaning and emotion of the participants’ words. The participants’ ideas, written with markers on flip chart paper, are then posted around the category’s stall. These comments serve as further prompts to subsequent participants and a continuing dialogue with creative synergy results.

1.2 SpeakOut and POE

The intention behind the use of the SpeakOut format in the POE setting was to allow a wide cross-section of participants to vocalize their satisfaction with a variety of elements of their community. The SpeakOut allowed issues of research importance, that may not have been identified by the Project Team, to surface and be discussed and evaluated by the participants. Many of the topics raised by the community members in this process were discussed in further detail in the more systematic in-depth interview method (see Method 5 of this Chapter).

Themes for each stall were chosen based on research areas of inquiry and specific target respondent groups identified during the development of the overall research methodology (see Chapter IV). The following table outlines the categories, prompts and activities used to elicit discussion. In addition, facilitators were given a set of initial questions, which are included in Appendix A. Each stall also had a page of directions for participants, which are included in Appendix B.

The False Creek North Post-Occupancy Evaluation SpeakOut, called ‘Have you Say! Day’ was held on Saturday, November 3 at the Roundhouse Community Centre. The venue provided appropriate open spaces and, as a popular community hub, was well suited to attract the maximum number and most diverse group of participants.

1.3 Analysis

Data collected were transcribed from the flip chart paper as a list of comments under each stall category. The information was tabulated and coded through a standardized analysis identifying common and reoccurring themes using a “lump-and-split” method of simple categorizing. For example, in one question participants were asked why they moved to FCN. In order to analyze this question, responses were grouped according to categories of answers (amenities, location, affordability, etc.), and analyzed further to determine the specific quality of response. These thematically grouped comments within the major themes of inquiry served as the basis from which to summarize participants’ opinions and experiences of living in FCN.

Table 5.2.1: The specific embodied activities used at the ‘Have Your Say! Day’ with their respective categories, SpeakOut.

Category	Visual prompts (photos)	Embodied activity	Questions (visual)
Community and satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two young girls of different ethnicity hugging. Baby's disgruntled face. Boy with teddy bear. Two senior women laughing. 	Participants marked their residence with a sticker on a large orthographic map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you move here? Does False Creek North meet your expectations? How does False Creek North compare to previous neighbourhoods? Does False Creek North have a community spirit?
Movement and transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intersection of Davie and Pacific Boulevard. Senior awkwardly stepping down step at the Roundhouse plaza. Cyclist and rollerblader along Seawall. 	-----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can you find your way around? What modes of transport do you use and for what purpose? Car? Walking? Bus? Skytrain? Ferry? Cycling? Rollerblading? Skateboarding?
Parks and plazas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tide sculpture. The red line public art. The yellow lawn chairs. David Lam playground. David Lam field. The Roundhouse Plaza. The sidewalk landscaping of Coopers park. The waterfront gazebo. 	Participants chose two categories that were most important to them from: Picnic places, comfortable places to sit, scenic views, shelter from the rain, ball sports for children, playgrounds and spaces for small children, tranquil and serene places, recreation spaces for youth, exercise opportunities for adults, spaces for dogs. They then explained their choice on the appropriately coloured sticky note and stuck it to the wall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your favourite outdoor places? If you could redesign the Roundhouse plaza, how would you change it? Do you find False Creek North parks suitable for your needs as: an active person? A parent? A senior? A dog owner?

Facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban Fare market inside view. Shops along Marinaside crescent. Seats and tables outside of Urban Fare. Curved commercial edge along Roundhouse Plaza. Bicycle shop and other retail outlets along Davie Street. Jugo Juice and other retail outlets along Pacific Boulevard. Entrance to the Roundhouse Community Centre. 	-----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are your needs met locally? Medical services? Entertainment? Shops? Schools and daycare? What are your experiences with community services and activities in False Creek North? What are your experiences operating a business in False Creek North?
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security camera outdoors. Open locking gate. A bushy enclosed park. An emergency call phone. A senior's emergency call necklace. A police officer. 	-----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would you walk alone at night? How safe do you feel: Bubble prompts: in your unit? in your building? in the parks? going into your building? When and where do you feel vulnerable? Do you feel FCN is safe for your children?
Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swimming pool. Billiard table. False Creek North skyline. Specific building in False Creek North. Specific building in False Creek North. Row of townhouses along the Seawall. 	-----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your impressions of the architecture in FCN? How are the common spaces in your building? Do you feel there is a community spirit in your building?
Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kitchen with guests. Living room with guests. A bedroom. An open space design living room, dining room and kitchen with large windows. 	Five examples of unit designs were available for contrast and comparison from which participants could initiate discussion of their particular unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the design, layout and size of your unit meet your needs? How would you describe the quality of your unit? Privacy? Acoustics? Ventilation? Light? Furnishability? Office? Laundry? Storage? Balcony? Rooms?
Families and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toddlers playing on beach. Children selling lemonade along the seawall. Coopers park playground. David Lam playground. Chalk drawings on the pavement. 	-----	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How suitable is FCN for raising a family? Will FCN meet the evolving needs of your family? How well does FCN meet the play needs of your children?

Adolescents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teenagers skateboarding on a ramp. • Youth playing soccer. • Youth playing tennis. • Single teenager skateboarding in a park. 	<p>Adolescents had maps on which they were asked to mark their favourite places with a gold star sticker, and places where they feel unsafe with a red sticker. They then explained their choices in the margins.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you like living in FCN/ • Where do you hang out and what do you like to do? • What would you change about FCN to better suit the needs of your age group?
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2.0 Sampling Strategy and Participation Profile

SpeakOuts are designed to facilitate structured “drop-in” participation. A wide cross-section of participants was recruited through various publicity schemes including:

- The three 3500 questionnaires randomly mailed to units arrived in residents’ mailboxes the day before the SpeakOut and included an invitation to the event.
- One week prior to the Have your Say! Day, an invitation was included in a school newsletter sent to parents of Elsie Roy Elementary School students, almost all of whom live in the False Creek North area.
- The day before the event, volunteers distributed flyers to students at St. James High School, many of whom live in False Creek North.
- During the days leading up to the event, advertising posters were placed in all stores in the area whose management agreed to participate. (See Appendix C for poster.) Building managers were contacted and those willing posted the advertisement in lobby news boards.
- A press release was written and sent out to local papers including: the *Vancouver Sun*, *The Province*, *The Courier*, and the *Georgia Straight*. (See Appendix D for the press release.) The Vancouver Sun published a short article written by Frances Bula about the research project on October 31, 2007 on page B.2. A four by five inch copy of the event poster was published in the Vancouver Georgia Strait weekly newspaper the week prior to the event.
- One of the course instructors, Larry Beasley, spoke about the event on CBC radio early edition on November 2 at 6:40am for several minutes.
- During the event, volunteers with flyers invited the public to attend in and around the Roundhouse Community Centre and the Urban Fare grocery store and café.

In all, it was estimated that at least seventy residents participated in Have your Say! Day. A debrief of all the workers at the end of the day raised some concerns that the average participant may have been of a higher income level than that which would be representative of the diverse community. Nonetheless, volunteers noted participants included adolescents, families, singles, and seniors all with a broad mix of gender and ethnicity. Among ethnic minorities, Chinese and Eastern Europeans were well represented. Moreover, several participants, especially families, self-identified as living in subsidized housing or co-operative living units.



Figure 4.5.5 Hand-crafted display.



Figure 4.5.13 Stalls overflowed with participants' comments.



Figure 4.5.4 Listener and Recorder document resident input.



Figure 4.5.12 The SpeakOut's intimate and lively space.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Community

Community is strong between certain groups of people: dog-owners and parents of young children for example; however, the neighbourhood has not yet developed a sense of self typical of established residential areas. Nonetheless, residents perceive a sense of place and ownership from having access to many local amenities and seeing the same faces in the shops and cafés. In particular, community is growing because of the numbers of children living in the area; many note that the co-operatives and subsidized housing units dramatically improved the quality of the neighbourhood for the better because of increased number of families.

Several point to community events and locations as being central to creating an atmosphere of inclusion such as the Halloween event¹, for instance, and the Roundhouse Community Centre. Schools and daycares for parents, Urban Fare, Granville Island and exercise groups such as ‘Curves’ exercise gym, paddling groups, and an Osteo-fit program for seniors were also mentioned as hubs of community activity.

Youth point out that all of their friends live in the same community, and some in the same building: “ninety percent of my friends live in the neighbourhood,” explains one youth.

While the majority of participants respond positively, a smaller, but still notable group of respondents believe that there is little to no sense of community in the area. One respondent explains that, as an avid jogger, he is familiar with both the South and North False Creek neighbourhoods: “people on the South side say ‘hi’, they’re friendlier, but on the North side, there’s no eye contact.”

3.2 Public Spaces

False Creek North residents feel strongly about their public spaces. In fact, those staffing the SpeakOut identified it as being the most frequented booth and comments are expressive with emotion and polarized views. Parks are loved, well used and the reason many residents chose to live in FCN over other downtown high-density communities. Most popular is the Seawall for local commuting, leisure strolls and active sports. Most express high satisfaction at the overall quantity and quality of public space. Several specific issues emerge however. Dogs in parks are emotional issues for many residents. Amenities for young children are plentiful and of high quality but residents feel that older youth and teenagers have been largely overlooked. Participants’ comments are discussed thematically below.

Safety in parks: dogs, litter and drug users

Dogs are a polarizing and emotional topic. The sheer number of complaints voiced during Have your Say! Day speaks to an important management issue. Most participants feel that the park spaces are not sufficiently separated according to user groups: dogs, no-dogs, and children and that where the separation exists, it is not enforced. “Dogs are one type of use that excludes other uses,” notes one resident, while another explains that “a small number of dog owners can usurp a park.” The

¹ Which had taken place only a few days prior to the event, which may be why it stood out in people’s minds so clearly.

strongest and most numerous voices surfacing throughout the day are those who believe that too many irresponsible dog owners allow their dogs to run free in areas not designated as off-leash and do not clean up after their pets. “People need to control their dogs,” implores one concerned resident, echoed by several others: “I’m happy there are parks for dogs, but what we need are parks for *people*... dog owners leave feces on the ground, which can be a huge health problem.”

Many residents are especially concerned for the safety of children amidst dogs and call for separation of uses with comments such as: “Dog parks and children playgrounds don’t go together;” “dogs can be dangerous;” and “we need to figure out a balance between the dog owners and the kid owners.” Better enforcement of existing rules is suggested by several participants to be a solution.

Less overwhelming, but still clearly heard, are the voices who appreciate that children can mix with dogs: “Dog parks and children go together,” argues one resident.

Dogs are not, however, the only safety concern. Many participants complain of homeless people, needles in the park, litter and rats, all of which make them feel unsafe. Again, concern of children’s safety is paramount. As they explain, “I don’t know what to tell my kids about the homeless people sleeping next to our building,” and “the homeless people bring needles too close to kids.”

Some suggest potential improvements, calling for more garbage cans, better lighting and increased housing and emergency shelters. “Cut the bushes! It’s a safety issue,” implores one resident, while another calls for more police presence.

Public art and park furnishings

Opinions about the art in the public space are diverse but some themes recur. Though many may debate the subject and presentation of specific pieces, the display of art in the public realm is greeted with unanimous appreciation. One suggests that the art contributes to a sense of community, while another feels the art displays should be taken a step further with a public art festival through which locals can become better acquainted with individual pieces.

Only when speaking about specific designs, do participants become critical. Several residents suggest that too much of the artwork and furnishings in the parks are metal and cold. Says one resident: “I am an artist, so I feel I can legitimately critique [the art] which reflects an industrial use of the residential area [and is] too hard-edged for a pastoral park. Steel is cold, no matter what colour you paint it.” Another asks: “why is all of the public art made out of iron? It all looks the same shade of rust.”

Specific pieces generally lauded are ‘The Raven Piece,’ ‘The High Tide Pavillion,’ ‘The canopied pagoda’ and ‘The Redline,’ though the latter three also receive some criticism.

Among the majority enthusiastic and the minority critical, are a few apathetic residents describing the public art as “O.k.” or specific pieces such as the bears as “kitschy” but all right, given that they are for charity. Water features are generally appreciated, though one resident complains that they are too often turned off and then fill with garbage.

Many criticize the parks’ functional amenities, calling for more seats and picnic tables and for seats made of wood and not steel, which becomes too cold. Others suggest more cultural and historical interpretation would be beneficial.

Diversity of activities

Park satisfaction often depends on the user group responding. Families with children respond overwhelmingly positively, explaining that there are many good parks with playgrounds and swings to which they can bring their children and grandchildren. The Roundhouse Community Centre and Science World are also appreciated for the children's activities that they offer. A skating rink and a story time for kids are identified as outstanding needs.

Other user groups are not so satisfied, however. Seniors complain of having to drive to find entertainment and that there are not enough activities nor exercise opportunities at the Roundhouse geared to seniors. Adolescents are another overlooked age group. "There is nothing for teenagers to do," complains one participant. Youth and parents alike complain that the one skateboard park is either exclusive to a specific group or is too far on the East side of the neighbourhood for parents to feel comfortable letting their kids go unsupervised. Many youth feel that they do have a lot to do and that they cycle, play tennis and basketball. However, they note there is competition for hard ground space between basketball players and skateboarders. Many say that they play soccer and other field sports but that there is not always enough space not in use. Several suggest that an outdoor swimming pool would provide more summertime activities. Middle-aged children complain that there are few amenities for them: "we have two baby parks around here but nothing for us." "What about a summer waterpark?" suggests a parent.

The majority of respondents believe that False Creek North Parks do offer a sufficiently wide breadth of activities: people-watching, walking, running, biking, roller-blading, skateboarding, sitting, doing Tai-Chi are all identified as potential activities outdoors. "The parks are both active and quiet" explains one participant, whose opinion exemplifies the majority. Unanimous appreciation is also given to the jazz festival and other community gatherings, with a call for more such events.

Views and landscaping

Views in and of the public realm are appreciated by many residents. "One of the best things about North False Creek is that you can round a corner and see a vista and you feel alone," summarizes one respondent. Several urge the protection of the mountain and ocean views, saying that they create a sense of separation from the city. The one recurring complaint is that of the growing marinas; many said that they are just "boat parking lots" that spoil the view. Others note the environmental impact, as one says "the herring has lost its fish," though some appreciate that the water is cleaner than it has been in previous years.

Apart from the view created, residents are more divided about the landscape choices in the parks. The strongest view point is that the parks are sparse and could use more flowers, sculptures, cultural elements, pathways and trees. One participant calls for the planting of more unique and exotic species. Some specific areas are points of contention for some people, such as the wide design of Pacific Boulevard, the concrete design of the park at Hamilton and Nelson and too much brickwork and cobblestone which is difficult for wheelchairs. Otherwise, residents seem satisfied with the landscaping and appreciate specific characteristics such as the emptiness with clusters of density and the contrast of the modern and the traditional.

Some participants suggest that the parks could be more strategically placed to create noise dampening barriers from traffic and night-club spill-over.

Seawall

The Seawall is a popular feature and a source of much discussion. The majority of residents are strongly complimentary of the design explaining that they use the Seawall for cycling and walking, not only as a recreational activity but also as a primary means of transportation. “The Seawall connects without being a road,” explains one participant, while another says “the Seawall is my means of commuting by bike to grocery shopping and work. I use it daily, that’s why I’m here.” Several voice their appreciation of being able to walk along the water and engage with the scenery without being distracted by noise, traffic and pollution. One participant explains that her children counted one thousand people per hour while they were making money selling lemonade on the Seawall. Many people express their appreciation of biking on the Seawall though a small number of residents complain that the cyclists tend to go too fast. Also, a few comment on specific wayfinding problems along the Seawall, calling for clearer signals indicating where bikes can and cannot go. Particular confusion occurs at a corner at Kings Landing where “there is a blindspot for cyclists and rollerbladers” and at the foot of Davie Street where “there is confusion between cyclists and pedestrians.” Another comments that she is concerned for the safety of her six year old around the waters’ edge.

Roundhouse Plaza

The Roundhouse Plaza was used as a prompt for site-specific discussion since preliminary research had suggested some dissatisfaction with the site, and because a residents association had at one point been discussing how to revamp it. Opinion voiced during ‘Have your Say! Day’ confirmed the residents’ dissatisfaction of the area. Comments are candid: “The Roundhouse Plaza is a black hole. Wow is it ever empty!” Different respondents describe the plaza as “bleak,” “empty,” and “a failure.” Although some residents voice appreciation for the heritage value of the site, all believe this characteristic is not well highlighted. Suggestions include filling the hole, which “is just used for garbage,” and adding plants and shade trees. Another resident suggests activating the train track rotation once a day and having outdoor events at the plaza to encourage its use. Another is not clear in her vision but would like to see a place where people can meet “but not the ubiquitous café.” Some residents complain of the loose bricks in the plaza, one explaining that he had tripped there, was injured and missed eight months of work. Not everyone is critical of the plaza, however. A smaller group of participants say that they like it.

3.3 Movement and transportation

Residents appreciate that they can access so many shops and services on foot or by bus. Almost all report using diverse modes of transportation and walking frequently within the False Creek North area. Many, however, explain that they have not been able to give up a car completely, as they use it for work, for grocery shopping or to access other areas in Metro Vancouver. Some note that the transit options are particularly good for teenagers, who can easily access activities located outside of the immediate False Creek North area.

Several residents emphasize that the transit options and proximity to work, services and school are particularly healthy for their family as they trade commuting time for quality family time. One comments: “I wouldn’t consider the suburbs, stuck in a house with a car and no community.”

Respondents are pleased with the community shuttles (C21 and C23) and generally enthusiastic about the new Canada/ RAV line station opening in Yaletown within close proximity to the area. Residents are also satisfied with parking availability and suggest the space is underutilized, particularly in parking garages. Some mention the need for more spaces designated to zip-car and co-op vehicles.

Concerns are evident, however. Transit costs are one: “There is no encouragement not to drive... people aren’t going to pay ten dollars for two people to travel two ways on the bus.” Further, residents express a need for more transit routes to Skytrain stations, as they feel that the current stations are “a bit of a hike” from False Creek North. Several people note that they expect the new RAV line to improve the problem.

3.4 Facilities and services

Residents are particularly satisfied with the *proximity* of shops and services; many comment on their ability to access almost any need on foot. However, the affordability and range of products and services sold at the local shops are inadequate for some forcing them to do much of their shopping outside of the neighbourhood and with a car. Groceries are a particular point of contention as the two options, Urban Fare and Costco, are at two extremes of convenience and price. Many participants complain of the high prices at Urban Fare, which render it inappropriate for everyday shopping despite its proximity and accessibility. Costco, offering much cheaper prices, only sells bulk products so that clients must drive and pay for parking even though it is not far from their homes. As a result, many respondents explain that they shop outside of the neighbourhood for the majority of their groceries. The greatest need then identified in the community is a mid-sized grocery store, with some emphasizing their desire that the goods be manufactured or grown in B.C.

Other retail gaps frequently cited include a bakery, a hardware store and family and child-oriented stores, including a dollar store and clothing shops. Many hope that the mix of stores will diversify with time.

Restaurants and cafés also evoke many comments. Several residents are pleased with the options offered in the area, while many suggest that more sidewalk cafés along the waterfront and more affordable restaurants are needed. In both cases: grocery stores and restaurants, several residents identify that market forces creating high rental costs are the primary culprit as businesses must cater to high-end clientele in order to afford overhead costs. Several residents express empathy for small businesses trying to operate in a harsh business environment and disappointment that many stores and services are therefore transient.

Medical services

In general, residents express approval of the medical services offered, with many saying that they use dentists, doctors, laboratories, optometrists and pharmacies in the area.

Schools and daycare

The quantity and quality of schools and daycares are emotional issues. While the neighbourhood’s Elsie Roy Elementary School is highly regarded and lauded as being one of the city’s best schools, the School is not sufficiently large to accommodate the number of children living in False Creek North.

The waiting list is long and, in the meantime, children are forced to attend private schools or public schools in more distant neighbourhoods, many with reputations for lower quality education. The daycare situation is similar, as residents identify the waitlist as being between one and a half and two years. The overwhelming sentiment of residents is that, “the facilities are great, if you could get in.” Those whose children do attend local schools and daycares are very pleased that everything is in walking distance and that their children’s friends are also their neighbours.

Roundhouse Community Centre

The Roundhouse Community Centre is unanimously appreciated by residents. Some do note room for improvement however. Suggestions include: more drop-in events such as guest speakers covering current affairs; lower prices for families with children; more activities for teenagers; and more exercise options for seniors. Though the Roundhouse offers many activities for children, parents explain that the costs can add up, especially when a family has several children and frequent rain means indoor activities are often needed. Teenagers are a particularly overlooked group. A parent explains that there are few options offered in between classes and activities for children and adults: “my 14 year old son finds that he has to play with youth for music and adults for martial arts.” Another participant suggests that teenagers would benefit by a clubhouse for their age group.

Entertainment

Some participants comment about entertainment needs in the neighbourhood, although the issue is not a priority topic. Those who comment express a desire to see more diverse entertainment options, particularly for adults, such as closer theatres showing a more diverse range of movies and forums for discussion and presentations in the Roundhouse. Many are unable to suggest which activities should be offered but recognize a need for more options. Several respondents emphasize that nightclubs are not appropriate for the residential neighbourhood, as the music and overflow are noisy and disruptive.

A library and a non-denominational church are identified as community needs.

3.5 Safety

Most residents feel reasonably safe in the neighbourhood but some comments about landscaping and lighting suggest that improvements are merited. Residents feel particularly safe inside their buildings but not all are comfortable outside at night. Homelessness and the perceived threat of discarded syringes from drug-users make some residents, particularly parents, feel insecure. Several parents also worry about off-leash dogs in the parks.

The prevailing sense of security in the area is attributed by many to the high-density living which adds to the eyes on the street. Several respondents even say that they will walk alone at night outside, though the late hours do keep some indoors: “I feel safe but I don’t go out at two AM, party time.” Not all comments are positive, however, and specific concerns identified by many are: homelessness, insufficient lighting, dogs threatening children, needles in parks, conflicts arising from bars, traffic concerns and property damage.

One sentiment is that city living may be safer for teenagers because of closer knit communities meaning more supervision and more activities: “kids get in trouble in the suburbs because there is nothing to do. Used to think it was that kids in the city got in trouble. In the downtown, there are so many options that are cheaper and you don’t have to drive everywhere.”

Traffic is seen as a significant concern especially along Pacific Boulevard; several residents call for traffic-calming measures and say that the fast driving prevents seniors and children from being able to walk alone. Some complain of cyclists biking too quickly along pathways.

Participants attribute their feeling of safety within the buildings to concierges, cameras, gates, lights and FOB systems (digital authentication devices).

Security measures in the public realm are lauded by several residents include police and private security presence, although some call for more police presence. Private bicycle patrols initially funded by Concord Pacific are appreciated by the residents and several explain that as Concord Pacific withdraws this service now that construction is largely finished, many buildings are pooling resources to fund the continued service. Others suggest that security will improve by providing more retail space which will increase community presence on the streets.

3.6 The Building

Generally, participants respond positively about their overall satisfaction with their buildings and a few respondents even say that they are “proud” to live in their building. Apartment buildings are seen as safe but several already have problems relating to construction quality, including leaking.

Positive comments about common space: the mail room, gyms, swimming pools and common rooms or party rooms, guest suites and communal courtyards suggest that such amenities are important and appreciated. Some teenagers living in buildings without games rooms nor swimming pools suggest that they would like these amenities. A few residents suggest that such areas help to create a sense of community within the building as they provide an area in which residents can meet. A few residents desire more common space or areas with specific functions such as more play space for children and areas for gardening such as green roofs. Several say that existing common space is impersonal in its design and underused.

Points of contention include insufficient or inconvenient parking, particularly for visitors, elevators that are too slow or unreliable and insufficient basement storage.

Architecture

Most respondents respond to the buildings’ architecture with cool satisfaction rather than enthusiasm. The majority of those who comment positively say “it looks nice” or it’s very pleasant.” However, a few people suggest that the architecture was a factor for deciding to purchase in their building. Particularly enthusiastic comments echo the sentiments: “I think it looks wonderful, it looks controlled, not a sprawling landscape,” and “the buildings look a little different. They are not carbon copies.” Several remark that the neighbourhood creates an enjoyable view from the other

side of False Creek. Residents express unanimous appreciation of the views from their buildings and the design around view corridors.

Even more residents, however, are critical of the area's architecture, which they believe to be too monotonous and gray. Representative comments include: "the architecture could have been more dynamic with more variety, more cutting edge," and "the buildings are too similar."

Sense of community in the building

The majority of respondents believe that there is a sense of community within their building and that it is quite easy to get to know other residents. One participant says, "we know all of our neighbours and have them over for dinner. There is a sense of community." A few participants, however, express a desire for a stronger sense of community with some calling for more social events, though they recognize that these are difficult to organize. Others blame transient renters or seasonal residents for a weak sense of community.

3.7 The Unit

Most comments about units are positive. In particular, residents appreciate their outdoor space, especially those with terraces, large balconies and lawn space. All feel that their units provide them with sufficient privacy.

Space within the unit

High dwelling unit costs mean that most residents are living in spaces that they feel are too small for their needs. With tight space, residents complain about insufficient storage and little flexibility in how they can furnish their unit. Private outdoor spaces, patios and balconies are loved by those who have them and greatly missed by those who do not.

Some residents improvise use of their unit's space. Several say that they use a second or third bedroom as an office, study or den. Some say that their den is used as a second bedroom. One couple with two children who had recently moved from a smaller unit remarked that "there is a big difference between 800 square feet and 1100 square feet - it's much more livable!" Space is seen as particularly limiting for growing families, and while units are generally deemed suitable for younger families, respondents suggest that they are not for teenagers. "Thirteen years is the cut-off for suitability," replies one participant, while an adolescent explains that "one friend in Coquitlam has a backyard so he can play anytime he wants. Not here." Other families note that the space limitation they accept a smaller living space: "you trade off running free in the backyard with spending time with kids. We take the bike one block to the Seawall and ride freely."

Heat and ventilation

The majority of participants comment that their unit becomes too hot in the summer. Of these, many note that their unit is south-facing and needing air conditioning or better cross-ventilation. Some note, that although their unit is uncomfortably hot, they hesitate to suggest air conditioning

because they prefer to support environmentally sustainable solution; some suggest the use of outdoor awnings.

Noise

Outdoor and traffic noise are an issue for many residents, who complain of ambulance sirens, party-boats in False Creek, construction, bar spill-over and noise from shopping carts in laneways. Sound barriers within and between units appear to be adequate. One family comments that “we don’t have to worry about being quiet. We can put our child to bed and have our dinner party.” A few do note that some sound travels from units above and they attribute the noise transmission to hardwood floors.

Open-living concept

Residents are equally divided about the open-living design, which provides little structural division between the kitchen and dining room / living room area. Though divided on the issue, residents feel strongly about the open kitchens. One emphasizes the point: “I HATE open kitchen, it is not good for hosting,” while another complains that the “smells from the kitchen travel to the rest of the house.”

Finishings

Most respondents complained of some aspect of their unit’s finishings. Many would like to see a fireplace added or have a shower instead of a bathtub. Some are concerned that the interior design could quickly become outdated. A few complain of non-brand name bathroom and kitchen fixtures that break and are difficult to replace. Others, though fewer, say that they are content with their finishings and particular appreciation is shown for high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows and hardwood floors.

3.8 Decision Making

Motivations and expectations

Residents appear to have moved to the area from diverse neighbourhoods including houses within Vancouver, other condominiums in downtown and suburbs as far as Langley and Tsawwassen. Respondents vary in the amount of time that they have lived in the area: anywhere from three to seventeen years for this sample.

Major incentives to move to the False Creek North neighbourhood include proximity to the Seawall, Granville Island and the ocean. The amount of park space is a draw for many residents, as is the ‘walkability’ of the neighbourhood. Several residents explain that they wished to downsize or that the purchase represented a significant investment opportunity. Many residents identify themselves as recently retired and therefore looking for a smaller home within walking distance to all needs. Many respondents are also newlyweds and residents with young families, who feel the area is a fun place to live.

When asked if the neighbourhood has met their expectations, residents generally respond positively or apathetically. In particular, residents note the convenience of the area as they can walk to downtown and have a shorter commute to work. Many appreciate the ability to walk and bike.

Several people suggest that their satisfaction has increased with time as the diversity of the community has changed, bringing more families, children and community. Others remark that downtown living provides a vibrant lifestyle: “there are tons of things to do here - it’s what I had hoped it would be!”

A few residents seem dissatisfied with their choice, pointing to safety issues, namely homelessness and late-night street-life on Granville Street as the culprits.

Length of Residence

When asked whether they are likely to leave the community in the near future, the majority of residents reply that they do not have plans to move. Other families indicate that they do plan to leave because their children cannot get into local schools or because their family is outgrowing their unit. Several senior residents are adamant that they will not move; one declares: “I never plan to leave. When I do, you’ll have to cart me out in a pine box,” and another requests that “when we die, we want our ashes spread out in the flower boxes on the balcony.”

4.0 Summary of Findings

Of the issues covered, some stand out as being particularly positive attributes of the community, or frequently shared points of contention. Frequent positive comments emphasize the following major points:

- The appreciation of children adding life and community to the neighbourhood and the positive correlation of children and subsidized housing;
- The quantity and quality of parks;
- The beauty and fluidity of the Seawall;
- Spectacular views and waterfront access;
- The ability to move easily within the community whether on foot or on bike;
- The proximity and accessibility of most major shops and services;
- Well-kept and useful common spaces and building amenities;
- Adequate security within buildings;
- Community created by human presence and public events;
- Community created between families and between dog-owners; and
- Adequate quantity and quality of medical services.

Other issues stand out as on-going concerns:

- Insufficient space in daycares and schools;
- Dogs off-leash that can be aggressive and that leave feces in parks;
- High prices in general including condominium units, shops, restaurants, transit and daycare;
- Insufficient lighting in the outdoor space;
- Too many syringes and homeless in the parks;
- Dangerous traffic on Pacific Boulevard;
- Insufficient cross-ventilation in South facing units;
- Too much late night noise largely from bars and night clubs;
- Too cold and monotonous a feel to architecture, landscaping and park furnishings;

- Weak sense of community beyond specific enclaves (families and dog-owners); and
- Too little separation between cyclists and pedestrians, especially along the Seawall.

Additional issues evoke emotive but divided responses, suggesting that further research is needed to elucidate the roots of the comments. Such issues include:

- Adequacy of storage within units;
- Flexibility of unit space;
- Degree of satisfaction with the sense of community;
- Satisfaction with particular park features; and
- Open-space design of units.

Other issues are noted as problems but are lacking in clarity as to what would be an appropriate improvement. Further research would help garner ideas for change or ways through which similar problems could be avoided in future developments. These include:

- Inadequate activities for seniors;
- Few community nodes for young adults, particularly singles;
- Insufficient space and programmed activities for adolescents;
- Lack of life in the Roundhouse Plaza; and
- Unaffordable shops.

In general, listeners and recorders during the SpeakOut noted that participants were happy to share ideas and voice their opinions. Most residents expressed overall satisfaction with the area and many of the criticisms were elicited only through further probing. The resounding sentiment seems to be “it is great, but...” and many, though not all, issues are related to management shortcomings rather than initial structural faults.

The SpeakOut was an effective method through which to highlight quickly the major issues facing the False Creek North neighbourhood by creating a safe environment through which a sampling of diverse residents could voice their opinions. The qualitative results will help to provide explanations and depth to the quantitative results elicited by the questionnaire and will provide a basis from which to seek more detail during the in-depth interviews.

Appendices

Appendix A	Facilitator prompts per stall
Appendix B	Participant directions per stall
Appendix C	Poster advertising Have your Say! Day
Appendix D	Press release advertising Have your Say! Day
Appendix E	Volunteer prompts

Method 3: WORLD CAFÉ

1.0 Setting and Procedure

1.1 The World Café model

Originally developed in 1995, the World Café (WC) model is a community engagement process that is based on the idea that people already possess the wisdom, knowledge, and creativity to address even the most complex challenges and issues. By creating a hospitable, comfortable, and welcoming context for the mutual discussion and sharing of ideas, the WC process encourages and facilitates the cross-pollination of ideas and insights among the participants.¹

The process commences by seating groups of four to five people at small café tables, and then setting up three rounds of conversation of approximately twenty to thirty minutes each. At the end of each round, the participants change tables while one member of each group stays behind as the table host. The table host briefs the new group on the conversation held by the previous group, and the discussions are thus built upon as the participants travel and regroup from table to table.

By providing opportunities for people to move in several rounds of conversation, themes and commonalities begin to emerge that might otherwise not be recognized. At the end of the rounds of conversation, a whole group conversation identifies patterns and possibilities for future action.

1.2 World Café and POE

The intention behind the use of the World Café format in a POE setting was to allow a more in-depth exploration by participants of issues that are difficult to address in the questionnaire or SpeakOut methods, such as the concept of community in FCN. Following extensive group discussion among the Project Team members, the key questions around community were:

- The nature of community—what constitutes it? What detracts from it?
- Does FCN have a sense of community? Is it a community?
- Is FCN home? What does that mean to you?

The research team had identified these questions as important to understanding how residents of FCN perceive and experience their neighbourhood, and the extent to which the planning objectives of creating community were realized. The questions were intended to form the topics for three rounds of conversations in the WC process. The other areas of inquiry identified were also touched on in this method.

1.3 Analysis

The responses for each question were grouped according to their theme using a “lump-and-split” method of simple categorizing. For example, in one question respondents were asked if and why FCN feels like home. In order to analyze this question, responses were grouped according to categories of answers (amenities, feeling of belonging, ability to modify one’s environment, etc.), and analyzed further to determine the specific quality of response. These thematically grouped comments within

¹ For further information on the World Café model, see Brown, 2005 and the World Café website, www.theworldcafe.com

the major themes of inquiry served as the basis from which to summarize participants' opinions and experiences of living in FCN.

2.0 Sampling Strategy and Participant Profile

In usual WC practice, Café participants are invited to attend the event, and the selection of participants is carefully made to create as diverse and inclusive a group as possible. The POE research team discussed various means of recruiting FCN residents into the WC process, to be held on the day of the SpeakOut at the Roundhouse Community Centre. Recruitment strategies included having sign-up forms and a drop-box at the Roundhouse at least two weeks prior to the public event; and using the questionnaires to provide recipients with a description of the WC, and a phone and E-mail contact for those who wished to sign up. The latter of these methods was chosen as the preferred one.

A general rule of thumb is that twelve participants or more are needed for the WC format to function effectively. Because of the delay in the distribution of the questionnaires (see the Mail-out Questionnaire method above) the research team decided that recruitment of WC participants on the day of the event would be necessary. As there was no way of knowing in advance how many participants might be interested in participating in the WC, the team adopted a wait-and-see approach to the day: If sufficient numbers of people expressed an interest in attending the two-hour group conversation, then a room would be set up according to the WC guidelines, a team member would function as Café host, and other members would participate as recorders and facilitators. If there were not enough people to hold a true WC, then the team decided that a facilitated group discussion could suffice to explore some of the questions around community and the meaning of home.

On the day of the SpeakOut, approximately eight to ten people showed up at the designated time and expressed an interest in participating in a more in-depth group discussion. Over a two-hour period, approximately a dozen individuals joined the conversation with a core group of six to eight people staying for the entire two hours. Participants were all adult residents of FCN, over the age of thirty-five, and were a mixed group comprised of men, women, seniors, couples, singles, and residents of both market and non-market housing. The discussion was facilitated by one research team member with another member acting as recorder. One of the course instructors observed for part of the time.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Community

The first topic that was put out for discussion was: *“What constitutes community? What adds to it? What does it consist of?”* One of the first responses to this question was, *“a sense of belonging.”* Another participant commented that community was *“a fence to lean across and ask for a cup of sugar.”* This comment elicited a follow-on discussion of what a “fence to lean across” or “a front porch” might consist of in a high-rise community such as FCN. Discussants focused particularly on the difficulty of meeting other people, including residents of one's own building, when *“everyone funnels into the parking garage in the morning and after work.”*

The group expressed a sense that more opportunities for informal meetings needed to be present in the FCN neighbourhood, both in the residential buildings themselves, and in the public realm.

Suggestions included more common social areas, both inside and outside, that could be used by residents for socializing, and block parties. The group was in agreement that the Roundhouse was an important focus of community within the FCN area, with one participant going so far as to say that, *“Without the Roundhouse, there would be no community.”*

A second round of discussion addressed the topic, *“What detracts from a sense of community?”* The majority of the discussants were of the opinion that the high percentage of renters in their buildings—individuals and families who rent condominiums from absentee owners—is a major impediment to the development of a sense of community in FCN. One participant commented, *“It’s tough to promote community if you are living in a hotel.”* While participants’ estimates of the percentage of rented units in their buildings—as high as 60% in one person’s estimation—may be higher, or even much higher, than is actually the case, what is important is residents’ *perception* that there are large numbers of rental units. Discussants felt that renters tended to move in and out regularly, producing high turnover rates in some buildings. While the discussants understood that renting, *per se*, was not necessarily antithetical to a sense of community—citing, in particular, the West End of Vancouver as an example—the majority did feel that renters in FCN lacked the same kind of attachment and commitment to the community that was felt by resident owners.

3.2 Public Spaces

Parks

Most participants felt that the parks in FCN, especially George Wainborn Park, *“looked good,”* but were unclear about what parks planners had in mind in terms of how the parks were to be used. One woman termed the parks *“sterile.”* A father complained that the parks were *“too orchestrated”* with little or no space to *“just throw a ball around,”* or for kids to have a place to *“run around.”* Another participant commented that the large, grassy areas in George Wainborn may have been intended for picnicking, but that planners hadn’t considered how much traffic noise there would be from the Granville Bridge. He commented, *“If they thought that people would picnic on all that grass, they didn’t take into account how noisy it is!”*

The discussants agreed that residents in FCN had appropriated some of the park space for their own activities, mentioning, in particular, the use of George Wainborn as an unofficial off-leash dog park. One man commented, *“The unleashed dog community has taken over this park, but I think that’s okay because it isn’t a good park for anything else. The off-leash dogs and their owners have become a spectator sport.”* A female participant observed that *“It’s interesting how people fit themselves into the contours [of the park spaces].”*

Semi-public spaces

Participants agreed that the landscaped spaces between residential towers—courtyards and plazas that belong to particular buildings/stratas, but are publicly accessible—are attractively designed, but little used by residents. Some discussants mentioned that common outdoor areas owned by some buildings such as *Space*—which aren’t accessible to the public—tended to be less attractive in appearance, but were being used in interesting ways by residents.

3.3 Movement and Transportation

The walkability of FCN was a positive feature of the neighbourhood mentioned by all of the group discussion participants. The residents enjoyed the fact that they can walk to just about anything

they need (the doctor, movies, shopping, etc.) and don't need to have a car, though most mentioned that they do use a car to access other shopping opportunities outside of the FCN area.

3.4 Facilities and Services: Commercial

The consensus of the group was that the main source for grocery shopping in FCN, *Urban Fare*, is too expensive, and most participants said that they preferred to shop elsewhere, even if it meant a weekly trip by car in order to do so. One participant expressed the view that, “*Services in the area make the community,*” and added that he felt more comfortable in “*small, family-owned stores—they should be coddled, encouraged. Anything we can do to encourage the small, local businesses should be done.*” Several discussants felt that the high rents in the area discouraged any business other than big chains from locating there: “*Some services that make community, like a book store, can't be here because of the market—the rents are too high.*”

Local restaurants also came under the group's scrutiny—several mentioned establishments such as *Bardot* as being inappropriate for a residential community since they attract a younger, noisier crowd, and “*are more drinking places than eating places.*” All participants were of the opinion that the mix of residential and commercial was a beneficial feature of FCN, but one man felt that *the “flow from residential to commercial is very antiseptic;”* that is, that the kind of interaction between residents and business owners found in older mixed-use neighbourhoods was lacking in FCN. Other discussants found some of the local coffee shops and restaurants to be too expensive to serve as everyday meeting places, and expressed a desire for more places to enjoy a coffee or lunch that were affordable and welcoming for local residents.

3.5 Community Safety

As a whole, the group found FCN to be a safe community in terms of personal security, though several mentioned property crime as a problem common to the neighbourhood and to urban areas, in general.

Several participants felt that the bicycle-mounted private security patrols are helpful in terms of discouraging panhandlers and homeless people from habituating the parks. One discussant thought that the dog walkers in the community provided additional security by adding more “eyes on the street”. Participants generally agreed that, while safety and security were important, a fine balance exists between creating a sense of security and trying to create a “*fortress [to protect] everyone.*”

3.6 The Residential Building

Comments about participants' buildings of residence primarily centered around: the need for more social spaces in the buildings; the lack of collaboration among buildings in FCN; and a sense that profits were driving the size and location of buildings to the detriment of a sense of space and community. Discussants felt strongly that noise—a major issue discussed in more detail in 3.8—is a factor that needs to be taken into greater consideration when buildings and neighbourhoods are being designed.

3.7 The Dwelling Unit

Discussants were in general agreement that units in FCN are small, especially those designed for families. One participant expressed the opinion that the buildings were being designed for “*yuppies,*” and that the profit-maximizing focus of development was resulting in “*families being*

shoe-horned into tiny spaces, and then they move out.” He felt that this phenomenon ran counter to the creation of an *“intergenerational mix as well as an economic mix”* in the community. Noise emerged, again, as an important issue when participants discussed unit design. As one man put it, *“Who cares what the kitchen looks like if you can’t get a decent night’s sleep in the summer because it’s too noisy to keep the windows open?”*

3.8 Decision Making

As mentioned in the previous two sections, all participants in the group discussion felt that noise levels in FCN—even taking into consideration the ambient noise of any urban neighbourhood—are excessive. While the decision to move to FCN was strongly influenced by the walkability and convenience the neighbourhood offers, noise is a significant factor affecting participants’ satisfaction levels, and plays a major role in decisions about whether or not to remain in FCN.

The following comments are illustrative of the opinions expressed:

“Noise is a constant problem. When we moved here in 2000, there were no problems. When Aquarius went in, they had all of this air conditioning in the back and heat exhaust. Finally, City Hall measured the noise and it was just under the critical point and then the City put in baffles and it helps, but it took a lot of work, letters, and so on.”

“We keep coming back to sound and noise. It took quite a fight with the City and the Parks Board to get the Roundhouse from having rock concerts. Bank trucks are here at night with their diesel engines running...”

“I moved out [of FCN] a few years ago. Construction of the RAV line was part of it, and we couldn’t leave our windows open at night. We shouldn’t need air conditioning [in order to be able to sleep at night in warm months].”

“We need a design fix for fresh air in the summer—Pacific Boulevard is too loud for open windows. There exists technological expertise to reduce noise—that could be a really good marketing ploy for developers!”

While the residents recognized that a certain amount of noise was part of living in an urban neighbourhood, all felt that more could be done, especially by urban planners, architects, and developers, to ameliorate the effects by taking noise abatement more seriously when designing communities and buildings. Discussants also felt that the commercial enterprises should be more appropriate to a residential area, that is, of a type that does not subject residents to loud, drunken behaviour, and the noise of motorcycles and cars as patrons leave local establishments in the wee hours of the morning.

4.0 Summary of Findings

When asked if FCN was “home” all participants answered an enthusiastic “yes!” They recognized that FCN is a very new community and expressed their belief that, were there to be a POE in another ten or twenty years, the results would be quite different. As one participant put it, *“Community and culture are dynamic, so it’s tough to create. In this neighbourhood in ten years, there will be a different dynamic.”*

Group discussants made the following points that can be useful and instructive to the designers of FCN, and to the designers of future high-rise, high-density urban neighbourhoods:

- In order to create a sense of community, residents need a variety of opportunities for socializing—within their buildings, in the public realm, and in the mix of facilities and services. There must be ample opportunities for people to have casual interactions that are not tied to particular organized activities or interest groups.
- Residents need spaces, interior and exterior, with which they can interact—rooms that can be used for a variety of purposes, and outside areas that can be used for impromptu recreation, picnicking, gardening, and other activities, much like a backyard would be used.
- Organizations and events that bring residents of different buildings and parts of the community together—and that purposely reach out to renters--can help to create a sense of community beyond one's own building.
- Designers of urban communities need to take noise abatement and management very seriously, because noise is a major determinant of people's satisfaction with their neighbourhood and can influence whether or not residents decide to stay.
- Walkability and convenience are major attractions for people considering a move to a high-density neighbourhood, but those beneficial effects can be outweighed by excessive noise levels.
- Architects and developers need to reconsider the size of units designed for families.
- Commercial enterprises, especially for grocery shopping, should reflect the needs of a mixed-income community.
- A community centre can serve as a very important source of community identity by providing a place for residents to meet and interact with one another.

Method 4 - A WEEK WITH A CAMERA WITH YOUTH

1.0 Setting and Procedure

1.1 The Week with a Camera model

In False Creek North, young people are a key user group. While too young to vote, youth must have a mechanism through which to express their unique and informed perspective. The 'Week with a Camera' model is a qualitative research technique designed to help planners understand a particular issue from the perspective of young people, although it can also be used with adults. It enables the youth to document how they use and perceive the environment, both natural and built. It also teaches the children about the importance of planning and encourages them to reflect on the important aspects of their community.

The process involves providing disposable cameras to young people and instructing them to photograph elements that are important to them in their neighbourhood. These participants then attend an intensively facilitated workshop where they have an opportunity to create a collage using their photographs and explain their choice of photographs to a facilitator.

1.2 Week with a Camera and POE

The youth at Elsie Roy Elementary School were briefed by Project Team members on Monday, November 19, 2007, two weeks prior to the event. During the briefing, two members of the Project Team briefly explained the scope of the Post-Occupancy Evaluation of False Creek North and that the purpose of the activity was to find out what young people think about the area. A letter and consent form outlining the project, its purpose and how the data would be used was provided to parents of the participants.

Each participant was given a 'camera kit', containing a disposable camera, basic instructions, a log sheet and a blank map of the neighbourhood (refer to Appendix A).

The participants were asked to photograph things they considered important to them in the neighbourhood. The instructions contained prompts for them to think about, including:

- Really special places you go in the neighbourhood.
- Places you don't like in the neighbourhood.
- Quiet places you like to go in the neighbourhood.
- Places you go with your parents.
- Places you find beautiful.
- Places you play in the neighbourhood.
- Places you go with people your own age.
- Your favourite place.
- Places you used to go when you were younger.
- Places you go where there are people of all ages.
- Places you find ugly.

For each photograph the children were to record on the log sheets provided:

- What the picture shows;
- Why it is important to them; and
- To mark the location of the photos on the map.

The participants took their first photo (of themselves), which were to form the centrepiece of their collages, during this initial briefing session. In this way, no children could forget to photograph themselves and if they had problems with the camera, guidance could be given at this time.

The participants were encouraged not to ask their parents or guardians for ideas and not to take parents or guardians with them when taking photographs, unless they needed to for their own safety.

Participants handed in their cameras for developing one week later on Monday, November 26. On Friday, November 30, an intensively facilitated collage-building workshop was held in which the youth had a chance to discuss issues of importance in their community with the Project Team. Nine facilitators and twenty-three students participated in the event: one facilitator for every four or five children. A main facilitator led the workshop and two leaders, both University professors, moved around the classroom and provided additional assistance when required. All facilitators attended a training workshop and were provided a facilitator guide prior to the event.

The workshop with the school students ran for approximately an hour and a half. Participants built a collage of their photographs and were permitted to use any or all of their photographs and could cut up their photographs if desired. Coloured pens, paper, creative scissors and stickers were provided for children to decorate their collages.

Once the participant built up a few photographs, a facilitator would start asking them about the pictures they had chosen and documenting their responses (while the young person continued to build the collage). Facilitators were instructed not to ask leading questions, but rather to allow the participant direct the discussion. The facilitators would then ask the participants what the photographs meant and try to understand the reasons behind their choices.

Small Post-it notes of the participants' comments were placed on each photo on the collage so that the facilitators' notes would easily correlate with the photos on the collage. The responses of the children were recorded in their own words.

Participants whose photos did not turn out, handed their camera in late, or did not take any photos, worked with magazines to build a collage and relate it back to their neighbourhood. If a participant had no photograph of themselves, they drew a picture of themselves in the centre of their collage.

Participants were presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from the UBC students and professors at the conclusion of the collage building workshop. See Appendix B.

1.3 Analysis

The Post-it notes from the collages, the information on the log sheets and the notes from the facilitators were typed for each participant describing what their pictures showed and why they were important to them. This included general descriptions of responses, as well as direct quotations from the participants.

The information was tabulated and coded through a standardized analysis identifying common and reoccurring themes. These themes were counted and clustered into categories corresponding with the area of inquiry categories identified by the Project Team:

- Community
- Public spaces

- Movement and transport
- Facilities and Services
- The building
- The unit
- Decision making

2.0 Sampling Strategy and Participant Profile

Elsie Roy Elementary School is the only elementary school within False Creek North; the majority of students attending the School live within the study site. The interest and support of the School to participate in the project provided an opportunity for the youth to take part voluntarily in the community consultation process of this project.

The research involved the participation of one Grade 6 class of 23 students, 13 females and 10 males. The age of the students ranged from 10 to 12 years of age. Two of the students lived outside of the False Creek North neighbourhood.

In all, 16 of the 23 students created collages from their photographs, while the remaining seven students whose photographs did not turn out, who handed their camera in late, or did not take any photos created collages from magazine images or drew pictures. A total of 15 of the 23 students returned their completed log sheets.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Community

The responses from the children in relation to the False Creek community were generally positive; ten of the twenty-three children made comments relating to their overall satisfaction with the neighbourhood. These related primarily to their overall happiness, the aesthetics of the neighbourhood and the view from public spaces over the water. Representative comments include:

“Overall I like everything here, not anything I don’t like too much” (Female, 12 years).

“Pretty cool...I like the neighbourhood” (Female, 11 years).

“It’s a nice street and I live on it” (Male, 11 years).

“A good design of buildings” (Male, 11 years).

High levels of satisfaction were also illustrated by several children indicating that the neighbourhood offers things to do, is centrally located, fun and has a mix of uses.

“Lots of places for children and adults to go” (Female, 10 years).

“Lots of places to have fun, don’t have to go far” (Female, 10 years).

“There is pretty much everything here” (Male, 12 years).

Although not asked directly, four of the twenty-three children referred to water views and views of the city skyline as reasons why they like the neighbourhood.

“Beautiful view early in morning when I walk to school...I like all the buildings”. (Female, 12 years)

“I like the water view”. (Male, 12 years)

“I especially like the water and the city skyline at sunset.” (Female, 12 years).

“I like to be near the water with a nice view, and I like the school on the water” (Female, 11 years old).

The children rated the attractiveness of the community highly. The quality of buildings, landscape and views influence their satisfaction and quality of life.

Limited research has been undertaken on how children adapt to living in apartment style accommodation. Although this was not a focus of the research, one child indicated that they would prefer living in an apartment in the city compared to a house in the suburbs.

“I don't like normal houses (suburbs) people are lazy and don't go outside (just watch TV), in the city, everyone goes outside” (Male, 12 years).

The children appeared to be generally satisfied with housing, lifestyle, community facilities, activities and services and that a sense of community contributes to satisfaction and quality of life for children.

3.2 Public Spaces

The public spaces in False Creek North are very important to the children, particularly the green open spaces. In all, 17 of the 23 children highlighted various aspects of the open spaces. Key elements of the public spaces identified by the children include:

- Green open spaces
- Seawall
- Spider climber
- Public art
- Environmental quality

The main use of open space was for sports and play. In total, 10 of the 23 children indicated they use the open spaces to play sports. These sports include (in order of importance):

- Soccer
- Tennis
- Basketball
- Volleyball
- Badminton
- Football

Only 4 of the 23 children use the open spaces to run around and play.

“I play here with my friends” (Male, 11 years).

“It’s a place where we can run around and go crazy” (Female, 12 years).

Other uses of open spaces raised by the children include walking, picnics, watching boats and socialising with friends or family.

“It’s a good place to meet friends and hang out” (Female, 12 years old).

Suitability of open spaces

The children find some open spaces more suitable than others. Some of the open spaces do not meet the evolving needs of the children. For example, 3 of the 23 children indicated the open spaces are unsuitable and 4 of the 23 children indicated the open spaces are more suitable for younger children. These comments relate to the public school playground and the play equipment in the parks.

“This is where I played where I was in grades 3, 4 and 5” (Male, 11 years).

“I like the park for the little kids to play. I go to the field” (Female, 11 years).

“I hate or dislike the park that is close to our school because it doesn’t really have much structure like the other play ground on the other side which has more equipment than this one” (Female, 11 years).

More specifically, one child indicated Cooper’s Park is unsafe and unattractive.

“I don’t like this place because it is very ugly and unsafe” (Female, 11 years).

Two children indicated the covered area under the bridge is an important place because it provides shelter from the weather.

“It is covered by Cambie bridge and dry when rains” (Male, 11 years).

Other aspects the children indicated as important include the public art on the sidewalk, amenities and the atmosphere:

“It’s good to have washrooms, because you don’t have to go home” (Female, 11 years).

“(The benches provide a) place to sit down outside and talk” (Female, 11 years).

One child suggested that play equipment for older children is needed, and this equipment should be fun and interesting to look at.

The Seawall

The seawall was an important aspect of the neighbourhood raised by 9 of the 23 children. In all, 6 of these children noted using the seawall for riding their bike. Other uses of the seawall include walking, talking their dog for a walk, looking at the view or getting some fresh air.

“I like this place because if you want to take a walk, it’s the place to take a walk. You could get some fresh air too” (Female, 11 years).

“The seawall is great, because I can go biking. That’s fun!” (Male, 12 years).

“It’s a nice place to visit and walk my friend’s dog. I like this place. I go with my Mom and I bike there sometimes” (Female, 11 years).

The Spider Climber

The spider climber is a piece of play equipment in the neighbourhood. A total of 5 of the 23 children indicated that the spider climber is an important aspect of the neighbourhood. One of these children believes it is unsafe, while the others indicated it is fun, that they play there with friends and that it has a good view from the top although several children felt it was intended for younger children.

“Fun to climb and look at view from the top” (Female, 12 years).

“Me and my friends climb it” (Male, 11 years).

“This thing could be dangerous for little kids. That’s why I don’t like it” (Female, 11 years).

Public art

The children found interest in the public art in the neighbourhood where 4 of the 23 children identified ‘the circle’ and 3 of the 23 children drew attention to ‘the rocket’. One child believed the ‘light display’ was important.

“I think it’s very cool” (Female, 11 years).

“It’s a cool piece of art” (Male, 11 years).

“It’s a piece of history for our community” (Male, 11 years).

Environmental quality

Some children were concerned about the environmental quality of the neighbourhood. In all, 5 of the 23 students raised issues relating to pollution of the water or litter.

“Lots of pollution here from boats, things floating in the water...it’s gross” (Male, 12 years).

“Used to be when you went down there you could see little fish in the water but then they put in the marina and now you don’t see fish any more, you just see oil floating on the water. I don’t like the harbour any more because you don’t see fish any more, just oil” (Female, 12 years).

“We need more garbage cans” (Male, 12 years).

Mix of uses

Several children suggested that the open space provides a nice break from the buildings and compared it to an area which has fewer open spaces.

“Break between high buildings, Yaletown has high buildings packed together” (Female, 12 years).

“It’s a nice place to meet and a nice break from all the buildings” (Female, 12 years).

One child suggested that there are too many buildings.

“So many buildings! At night lots of light. Too many buildings” (Female, 10 years).

3.3 Movement and Transportation

Movement and transport was a relatively important issue to the children. A total of 7 of the 23 children talked about various aspects of transport, these included buses, the Aquabus and safety.

The children mostly walk to school but some have an awareness of public transport.

“The bus-stop is really convenient because people can get around and it’s good for the environment because people don’t have to take cars” (Female, 11 years).

The Aquabus is also used by children in the neighbourhood.

“I like the Aquabus, it takes you everywhere. The Aquabus takes us to Granville Island” (Female, 11 years).

One child raised concerns about pedestrian safety and impact of traffic in the neighbourhood.

“People rush around too much” (Female, 10 years).

3.4 Facilities and Services

The facilities and services in False Creek North are very important to local children. They use these facilities and services in a different way from the way adults do so it was very important to understand what is important to them and why. Aspects of facilities and services in the neighbourhood identified by the children include (in order of importance):

- Roundhouse Community Centre
- Elsie Roy Elementary School
- Shops
- Library
- Services

Roundhouse Community Centre and Vancouver Public Library

The Roundhouse was the most important node for the children living in False Creek North. A large proportion (18 of 23) children consider the Roundhouse important to them. In all, 7 of the children directly stated that it is fun, many of which were girls.

“Roundhouse is a good place to hang out and has fun activities” (Female, 11 years).

“Is a great place to hang out and have fun, I like that place” (Female, 11 years).

“Fun place to hang out with friends” (Female, 11 years).

“A fun community centre” (Female, 12 years).

Many of the children (10 of 23) said that they use the Roundhouse for social interaction or to hang out with friends.

“That is where I play basketball and air hockey with my friends” (Male, 11 years).

“I like this place because it’s a very good place for people like me to chill and hang out with my friends. And play in the gym!” (Female, 11 years).

“I go there with friends” (Male, 11 years).

Nearly half (12 of 23) said that they use the Roundhouse for organised activities such as youth group or sports.

“It holds many programs and activities every month and is a good place to hang out” (Female, 12 years).

“Where youth night takes place” (Female, 12 years).

A few (3 of 23) indicated there is a need for a café to reopen in the Roundhouse.

“New café with cookies and Rice Krispies would be good” (Male, 12 years).

Other comments relating to the Roundhouse include:

- It is a good place for entertainment
- It is centrally located in the neighbourhood
- It is a good place to learn things
- A place to hang out during lunch hour
- A convenient place to earn community service hours
- Has friendly staff
- Is good when it rains

The areas surrounding the Roundhouse, including the bridge, were also identified by the children as fun places to hang out and socialise with friends.

Only 2 of the 23 children indicated that the Vancouver Public Library, central location, is an important place in the neighbourhood. However, for these two children the library was very important. They use it to read books, use the internet, socialise with friends, watch videos and learn things.

“My parents drop me off so they can go shopping...it’s where I borrow books, do research and surf online” (Female, 12 years).

“I use the library a lot. I use the computers to find books, watch videos” (Male, 11 years).

Elsie Roy Elementary School

The children also identified the School as an important aspect of the neighbourhood; 11 of the 23 children noted this. The children were positive towards the school and the role it plays in their lives. Two children stated directly that it is a fun place. In all, however, only 4 of the 23 children think the school is important because that is where they see their friends.

“Is a fun place to learn and play with friends” (Female, 12 years).

“I met all my friends here, I learn here and its fun here” (Female, 12 years).

Some (6 of 23) children like the school because it is where they learn.

“I like my school. It is where I learn” (Female, 11 years).

“I like this place because I am always ready to learn” (Female, 11 years).

One child indicated the school is important as it attracts families into the neighbourhood.

“Attracts families and other kids” (Female, 11 years).

A few students (3 of 23) like the location of the school either in relation to their building, parks, water or the Roundhouse.

“I like to be near the water with a nice view, and I like the school on the water” (Female, 11 years old).

One student who lives outside of the neighbourhood indicated he does not like the location, as it is a long way for him to travel to school.

Shops and services

The shops in False Creek North are important to the children that live in the neighbourhood. In particular, the children use the shops during their lunch break or after school with friends or family. The key shops in the neighbourhood that the children use include (in order of importance):

- Urban Fare
- Starbucks
- Seven Eleven
- Subway
- Bojangles

Most comments regarding the shops related to them being in a convenient location to school or home, places to buy groceries, places to buy candy or cookies, or places to buy lunch.

“This is a place (Urban Fare) where I go with my parents. It’s also a very good place to shop for food and candy” (Female, 11 years).

“This is where we go after school to hang-out and eat pizza” (Female, 12 years).

“Bojangles has got really big cookies and we hang out there and do homework there after school” (Female, 12 years).

One child indicated that the Dollar Store, recently opened in Yaletown, is good for the children.

One child indicated the restaurant near his home is very noisy and keeps him and his family awake at night.

Overall, the children seemed satisfied with the shops in the neighbourhood and do not need to go outside of the neighbourhood to meet their general day-to-day needs.

“There are lots of shops here like Costco. If one shop doesn’t have something, you don’t have to go across town to find it” (Male, 12 years).

“It’s a nice way to get groceries (Urban Fare). Instead of taking a car, you can walk across the street, and you can get everything there. And you can get a few things at a time, like tomatoes” (Male, 12 years).

Only 3 of the 23 children highlighted the services that they use or are available to the neighbourhood. All of these children highlighted the dentist, while other references were made to the medical centre and chiropractor. One child indicated they do not use the local services but it is good to have them close in case they are needed.

“There people can get better, and it’s close to home. I don’t go there, but it’s close” (Female, 11 years).

3.5 Safety

One girl indicated the open spaces are good, but not safe for children.

“Not safe to walk alone” (Female, 12 years).

The child indicated some open spaces are not visible from the street as the trees provide a barrier. The lack of natural surveillance on the open space makes it unsafe, in their opinion.

3.6 The Building

The children were not prompted to talk about their unit or building but 8 of the 23 children discussed their buildings. The children identified the building in which they live as a safe comfortable place and a place for social interaction with friends.

“I like my building” (Male, 11 years).

“This is my building, and I really like it” (Female, 11 years).

“It’s my place to play games and have fun” (Female, 12 years).

“This is the games room in my building. There is a pool in it and a playroom. If the Roundhouse is closed, you can play in the games room. All my friends live in the same building so we can access it, or we can invite people over” (Male, 12 years).

Several children talked about the private courtyards in their buildings. One indicated it was for young children and another indicated it was a safe place to play and visible from their apartment.

“It’s where I can take my brother outside while my parents are out” (Female, 12 years).

“The playground in the courtyard is only for kids up to 5 years old. But we have a good field, and we go here” (Male, 12 years).

One child indicated that his building does not have adequate private open space.

“I like and don’t like this place because first of all I like it because I live here and it’s comfortable and I don’t like it because of the courtyard we have, it’s too small!” (Female, 11 years).

Most of the children in the class live within a close proximity to one another. Most children indicated they know other children in the building where they live.

“There are a lot of friends in our building, so there are lots of people to play with...I can name about 20 people who live in our building” (Male, 12 years).

The children appear to have a strong sense of community within their building and with friends living in buildings nearby. This appears to increase their opportunities for informal social interaction such as ‘hanging out’ with friends.

There was one child who indicated they really like where they live but the building needs maintenance.

“This is my building and it kind of a disaster; it is really old and it has a leak” (Male, 11 years).

3.7 The Unit

Only 4 of the 23 children took pictures of their unit. Two children thought the view from their unit was important, while another two identified their unit as a place to interact with their friends. One child also identified the location of the unit as convenient because of its proximity to the school, Roundhouse and parks.

“For fun me and my friends go to each other’s houses” (Male, 11 years old).

4.0 Summary of Findings

The key findings from the consultation process show that children relate to the neighbourhood in a different way from the way adults do. Children of differing ages use spaces for different purposes and have unique needs and preferences which can only be identified through consulting them. The highlights of this consultation process are discussed below:

The children were very positive towards social interaction, learning and satisfaction with the natural and built environment. They enjoy attractive environments, buildings and views and they like having things to do that are fun and located close to home. Overall the children appear to be most satisfied with their lifestyle and community in False Creek North: the area caters well for the needs and preferences of children.

The children enjoy having a mix of uses in the neighbourhood so they do not need to go outside of the neighbourhood; they like places where they can play freely, play sports, shop, hang out with friends and entertain themselves. The children find green open spaces very important and use these places for sports and playing. The Seawall is also another important element of the neighbourhood for walking, biking and taking dogs for a walk. Although some of the spaces meet their needs, other spaces they find unsuitable. The play equipment is designed for younger children and does cater for their evolving needs. Safety was also raised in relation to the play equipment and casual surveillance of open spaces. The children identified the public art in the community as interesting, suggesting it gives the neighbourhood character.

Most of the children have an environmental awareness and enjoy fresh air; several children raised concerns on the water pollution and litter in the neighbourhood. They like the greenery which provides a break from the towering high rises which make up the neighbourhood.

Most children find the neighbourhood walkable and this is their primary means of getting places in the neighbourhood. Creating an area that contains a mix of uses and is walkable is very important to the children as it increases their independence and ability to use the neighbourhood. Some children have an awareness of the public transit available.

The Roundhouse Community Centre was potentially the most important element in the neighbourhood for the children; it operates as a node and landmark where the children meet and interact. They find it fun and use it for informal and formal social interaction and entertainment. The children have a good awareness of activities the Roundhouse provides. The School was also important to the children as a place to learn and for social interaction. The shops are another source of social interaction and provide sheltered places for the children to interact. They appear to meet the needs of the children.

The children that commented on their unit were positive and like the views or location. Most children live within close proximity to one another. Having friends living close by means they can use the spaces collectively.

Most children are living in apartments and do not have individual private open space, hence the communal spaces in their building and within the neighbourhood are increasingly important to them, although they are underused by this age group. Some children commented on their courtyards in that they cater for younger children, are safe, are visible from their unit yet are too small for their use.

Appendices:

Appendix A A Week with a Camera - Camera Kit for Participants

Appendix B A Week with a Camera - Certificate of Appreciation for Participants

Method 5: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

1.0 Setting and Procedure

1.1 The In-depth Interview Model

Extensive probing and open-ended questions characterize in-depth interviews. In essence, in-depth interviews involve not only asking questions, but the systematic recording and documenting of responses coupled with repeated interviews with the target audience (or respondent) to elicit deeper meaning and understanding of their responses.¹ In a typical in-depth interview, an interview guide is followed that includes a list of questions or issues that are to be explored and suggested probes for following up on key topics.² By the early 1920s, the interview in a recognizably modern form, both structured and unstructured, had become established as a data collection method in sociology. Its roots can be traced back to the Chicago School term ‘life history,’ since, like more modern versions of the unstructured interview, the ‘life history’ involved a degree of sustained interaction between the researcher and research participant, was relatively unstructured in form, and focused largely on subjective elements of the interviewee’s life.³

1.2 In-depth Interview and POE

To capture the experiences of the participants living in FCN, we conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews in which we used a pre-prepared interview guide (Appendix A) to guide the discussion. We permitted deviations from the set questions so long as they pertained to the major themes of inquiry: the unit, building, parks and plazas, mobility, sense of community, sustainability and reasons for moving to or from FCN. We took this position because it was our aim to capture the experience of the residents and we did not want to assume that we knew what the important issues within the community were.

The results of the SpeakOut, mail-out questionnaires and World Café influenced the formulation and selection of questions in the interview guide. It was our intent to use the findings from the previous methods to identify specific areas of further exploration. The sustainability of FCN arose as one of those themes which we had not previously covered, but which some members in the community identified as important to them. We also consulted with planning experts from the City Planning Department, the Vancouver Parks Board, and James Cheng, from James KM Cheng Architects Inc., to determine other questions of interest to the planning community.

Interviews were held at the Roundhouse Community Centre on various dates and times from early February to early April. They generally took between 60 - 90 minutes and were audio recorded; all participants were informed of the use of audio recording and gave their written consent. All recordings were later transcribed for content analysis. Participants were assigned a randomly generated code that appeared on their consent form and was used to identify their recordings and transcriptions.

¹ Guion, 2006

² Frechtling and Sharp, 1997

³ Lee, 2004

1.3 Analysis

Nearly all the variables were measured explicitly through open-ended questions. The responses for each question were grouped according to their theme using a “lump-and-split” method of simple categorizing. For example, in one question respondents were asked what their unit’s strengths were. In order to analyze this question, responses were grouped according to categories of answers (space, light, balcony, etc.), and analyzed further to determine the specific quality of response. These thematically grouped comments within the major themes of inquiry served as the basis from which to summarize participants’ opinions and experiences of living in FCN.

2.0 Sampling Strategy and Participant Profile

Participants of the in-depth interviews all self-selected themselves. All individuals who indicated on their returned questionnaires that they would be interested in being interviewed were contacted via email and/or phone depending on what contact information they included. A total of twenty interviews were conducted. Nineteen were of people who had returned a questionnaire. One person who had not received a questionnaire in the mail but had heard of the study through other means contacted us directly to be interviewed; some of their profile data was not obtained therefore the following profile is based on the nineteen participants for whom we did have profile data from the questionnaire. Not all questions from the interview were asked and/or answered due to time restrictions. Some participants felt it was more important to focus on certain elements of their experiences in FCN and they were permitted to elaborate on specific experiences at the expense of being asking other questions. The sample size for each of the interview questions is therefore indicated.

The majority of interviewees were woman with only four men arranging interviews with us even though 43% of the people who indicated on their questionnaire that they would be interested in being interviewed were men. The age distribution for participants is as follows:

Table 5.5.1: Age distribution of interview participants

Age	Number of Participants
18-25	0
25-39	6
40-59	6
60-74	5
75+	2

Nine of the participants were married or common-law, four of which had one child at home. No single parents were interviewed. The remaining interviewees were single. Some had lost spouses and/or had children leave home but family compositions had not changed drastically for any of the participants since they moved in. English was the primary language spoken in all the homes of the participants although two participants indicated that they also spoke Filipino and Japanese at home. Participants displayed a range of household incomes, although the people who earn less than \$20 000 a year were underrepresented and very high incomes were over represented.

Table 5.5.2: Income distribution for interview participants

Income range	Number of Participants
Less than \$20 000	1
\$20 000 - \$49 999	5
\$50 000 - \$79 999	3
\$80 000 - \$149 999	7
\$150 000 or more	3

Seventy-five percent of the participants were Canadian, thirteen of which had previously lived in Metro Vancouver before moving to FCN. All except one had lived in multi-family housing before and nearly half had previously lived in Vancouver’s downtown core.

Table 5.5.3: Previous places of residence, in-depth interview

Location	Number of Participants
FCN	4
Downtown Vancouver	4
Elsewhere in Vancouver	2
Metro Vancouver	3
Outside of Metro Vancouver	2
Outside of Canada	4

Nearly all participants lived in an apartment/condo at the time of the interview; only one lived in a townhouse. For all, their unit in FCN was their primary address. There was a range of tenure types represented.

Table 5.5.4: Distribution of tenure, in-depth interview

<i>Tenure</i>	
Rent from landlord	3
Rent from family	0
Own with mortgage	9
No mortgage	5
Co-op	1
Social housing	1

Participants had lived in FCN for varying amounts of time although most had lived there for over a year. Only one was planning on moving in the next year because she was moving to another country.

Table 5.5.5: Duration of residency in FCN, in-depth interview

<i>Duration</i>	
< 6 months	3
6-12 months	2
1-3 yrs	7
3-5 yrs	2
5 + yrs	5

Table 5.5.6: Length of stay participants are expecting to remain in FCN, in-depth interview

<i>Duration</i>	
Less than 6 months	0
6-12 months	1
1-3 yrs	5
3-5 yrs	3
5 + yrs	7
Don't know	3

Other characteristics that the sample population displayed include the following: One senior was on limited income, one was of a visible minority, seven were women living alone, one person had previously had a disability when living in the area, four participants were owners of businesses located in FCN (all out of their homes), and two were dog owners.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Community

Overall, residents' responses to questions pertaining to the neighbourhood's sense of community were varied. It seems individual experiences are dependent on the residents own profile, habits and past experiences as well as their definition of the word community. Strong community is felt by residents who are used to the suburbs and are pleasantly surprised by the vibrancy afforded by a downtown community. It is especially felt by dog-owners, parents with young children and strata council members of older buildings. The accessibility of services in close proximity and the familiarity provided through small local shops and recognisable faces makes community feel very strong for those who described it in such terms. FCN's sense of community is considered weak by residents who have lived in vibrant downtown areas of some other cities and by those who define community more by strong relationships and friendships.

Existence of community

"Is there a sense of community in False Creek North?" residents were asked.⁴ Of the 17 people asked this question in the interview, 8 found reasons to say there was community but did so reluctantly. Generally, their responses began with qualifiers: "a bit," "sort of." On either extreme, those who do believe False Creek North has a sense of community and those who believe it does not are about equally split.

So how does one interpret such varied responses? It appears, once respondents expanded on their initial answers that much depends on how one interpreted the word community. Those who did laud the sense of community tended to associate it with density, activity and seeing the same faces. "I do

⁴ 17 interviewees were asked if they felt that False Creek North had a sense of community and how they felt about that.

think there is a sense of community, certainly,” replied one resident, “we have like local magazines and newspapers.” Others describe advertising that arrives in the mail that is focused on businesses in the surrounding area. Most appreciate familiar faces, “To some extent there is community, in the sense that we have our favourite little stores that we go to, so we see kind of the same faces.” Those who do not feel a strong community, tend to define it by deeper relationships; as one interviewee stated: “I know everybody in the stores, but I don’t really know the people.”

The sense of community seems to be a superficial one, very strong in the sense of being able to meet all of one’s needs in proximity with the ability to move about easily and some sense of belonging evolving from routine and familiarity since the cafés and Urban Fare do attract the same people, but weak in other respects. Some blame transience in the neighbourhood with several respondents even specifying the diversity of culture, although generally appreciated, to be a barrier to getting to know one another, particularly when language adds another divide. One resident expanded on her sentiment in depth,

“There isn’t that “hi, how are you?” and bumping into people on the street. I don’t think it will come (with time) and the reason that is not going to change is because you are going to continue to have a large amount of renters, people that are only here for a short amount of time, people that aren’t investing into community. It is the transience as opposed to the language because if I go into Chinatown, I feel a sense of community even though I don’t live there - it is a warm and fuzzy neighbourhood. Even though people are chatting away in their own language. That is a fun part of being in Vancouver. But you don’t get that here.”

Another factor that appeared to be determinant of a residents’ interpretation of community was the amount of time that they had lived in the neighbourhood. Of those who did feel a strong sense of community, most are long time False Creek North residents, having lived there nearly or in excess of ten years. However, while many newer residents felt that the sense of community might grow as the community ages and as they spend more time living there, two long-term residents suggested that from their perception, the opposite is true: community is not growing but declining as the area becomes more dense and “pretentious” with rising real estate prices.

Those residents who were newer to the neighbourhood but still felt a strong sense of community, tended to be parents with young children or dog owners. Indeed these two groups did appear to be the ones with the strongest connection to their neighbours as they frequently meet one another and chatted at the playgrounds and at the dog parks. The sense of community that they discussed is witnessed by other residents, many of whom commented, at times almost wistfully, that they would likely feel more connected to the community if they were a parent or a dog-owner. Nonetheless, the community that had developed among those groups is appreciated even by on-lookers who see the children and families playing in the parks. “Children moving in were the best thing that ever happened to this neighbourhood,” explained one resident.

Importance of community

But to what degree is the sense of community a significant issue? When asked whether they would like to see more community almost everybody said yes, and some quite emphatically “absolutely.” “It is very important.” Other comments later on in the discussion suggested that while people

preferred to see themselves as independent or not in need of more ‘friends’ the lack of a strong sense of community does impact them significantly. One respondent recounted a telling story,

“Just the other day there was a lady at the bus stop who smiled at me and I smiled back and just as the bus came she said, ‘thank you for smiling at me.’ And I thought I don’t have to be thanked for smiling and it kind of stayed with me. She said, ‘there are a lot of people you smile at and you get a very sour look back’. And I thought to myself - isn’t this sad?”

It appears that the sense of community is sufficiently lacking for some that it creates a sense of isolation: “Vancouver is a hard place to make friends. Other places I’ve lived I have been able to make friends much quicker and I knew how to go about it and here, I thought what? Is it me? Am I changing? But other people have said the same thing.”

Promoting community

The majority of residents interviewed said that they would like to see more areas where people could get together.⁵ While many were not certain what that might look like, several ideas were expressed. Many residents would like to see more organized events initiated by the City, the Roundhouse Community Centre or the Yaletown Business Association though it is important to note residents were unanimously appreciative of the events that were already organized by the latter two associations. Nonetheless, there appears to be a sense that the Community Centre could do more to reach out to seniors and make use of the Roundhouse Plaza’s “wasted” space. Residents believed that community could be promoted by more affordable stores and by a broader diversity of activity centres such as informal theatres and small local libraries. Many feel that changes at a design level could also be useful; in particular, more outdoor life fostered by more patios, pedestrian style streets and a more hospitable Pacific Boulevard.

Friendliness of the community

Some variation in responses was evident when questions were asked with different wording. When asked if they felt that False Creek North was friendlier than other places where they had previously lived, the majority of the interviewees said yes, even some who had not been particularly positive about the neighbourhood’s sense of community. Nonetheless there was some variation in responses from, “No, people here are a bit snobbish,” to “Yes, I haven’t felt this much community in years.” While it is difficult to draw connections between such varied experiences, peoples’ responses do indeed depend significantly on their past experiences. Some previously lived in denser parts of downtown Vancouver and felt that False Creek North was friendlier than, for instance, Gastown or Coal Harbour. Again, responses depended on a person’s interpretation of the word ‘friendly.’ One respondent emphasized an important nuance when she specified, “I would say it is more congenial than where I’ve lived previously,” while another explained, “I would say it is slightly less friendly. But again it is just (the opportunity) to meet each other but when you do get a chance, everyone seems really nice.”

Parents with young children were more prone to speak positively of friendliness than they had of community. Interestingly, few respondents had had the experience of living in suburbs, but for those who had, all said that False Creek North had more community and a friendlier atmosphere than

⁵ 15 residents were asked what encourages or discourages community.

suburban areas of London, England or Toronto. The most enthusiastic resident, explained her experience, “I lived in the cookie cutter suburbs of Toronto where you have this massive house and you don’t get to see anyone. Especially with the winters, you bury yourself in your house. Whereas here, we’re out everyday. I’ve never experienced this, which is why I am so hell-bent on staying here!”

Chatting and visiting with neighbours

Perhaps a more concrete way to gauge the degree to which the neighbourhood has been able to foster community, is the amount of people with whom residents actually chat with people from and visit neighbours. Many residents found that they chat casually with “loads” of people, anywhere from 40 to just a few. Not everybody is equally extroverted, of course, and opportunities to socialize vary as dog-owners and parents have more occasions for interactions. However, most people identify a few shopkeepers or neighbours to whom they might say hi, though they likely do not know one another by name. For almost all residents, relationships are kept on this very casual level. When asked how many homes they visit in their neighbourhood, almost everybody answered none. The majority of those who do visit neighbours know them from other avenues such as work or from before they moved to the area. An exception is a young family with children who visit other parents with children in the daycare. A senior resident in the area also said that she visits people but that they tend to meet up in the neighbourhood’s cafés since their units are rather small.

When asked if they would ask someone in their building to watch their place if they were away, most people answered yes though some said no because they did not know anybody personally. Also, many pointed out that they would prefer to pay the concierge for the favour of checking in. These questions confirm the picture that was being depicted from the initial questions of community: that it exists in a sense of space and familiarity but that the opportunities to build more meaningful relationships largely do not exist for those who are not dog-owners or parents.

Community mix

False Creek North planners had intended for the community to be home to a wide range of people. With co-operative and subsidized housing among market condos, a socio-economic mix as well as a cultural mix was foreseen. Researchers sought to glean how effective such policies had been in attracting a mix and integrating it into a cohesive community. Almost all who responded to the question felt that False Creek North did indeed exhibit a diverse ethnic, socio-economic and age profile and everybody said that they appreciated it, some very emphatically, “Yes, absolutely. It is really a melting pot and I like it. I don’t want to be with a bunch of people my age. I like to see young people and different nationalities. It is really interesting when you walk around the Seawall how many languages you hear.” Such responses suggested that any disconnect felt in the area is one of management and not of design, where community centres and city programming should perhaps include in their mandate that of bridging cultures and creating spaces for more interaction.

Those few who felt that the area is more homogeneous tended to focus on age or socio-economic status noting that the area is predominately young and increasingly rich. “We are probably all a bunch of white yuppies,” explained one resident who was not concerned since the dominant profile is her own and this made her feel quite at home.

With the question about community mix and some questions specific to the experience of those residents who live in subsidized housing, the interviewers sought to elucidate to what degree lower income residents were able to feel at home in the area. No respondents suggested that the

subsidized housing was conspicuous or really made mention of it at all in relation to the question of community mix. Those few living in the subsidized housing units whom we interviewed (there were only two) said that they felt no particular stigma to where they lived. On the contrary, they said that the buildings were designed to blend into the neighbourhood and included high quality finishings such as some brick. “If there is a stigma,” said one resident, “I don’t know about it.” The high prices in stores are a point of contention for those with lower income, but their concern was echoed by many with higher incomes as well. Indeed, the majority of interviewees who owned their condos also said that they leave their neighbourhood to do their grocery and other shopping, particularly when considering major purchases.

3.2 Parks and Public Open Spaces

The outdoor common space and landscaping in False Creek North is one of the area’s most appreciated and well-used attributes.⁶ Many residents specifically chose to live in FCN rather than one of Vancouver’s other downtown communities because the area affords such accessibility to the water, and connects smoothly to the broader downtown park system through the Seawall. One interview respondent, when asked if the parks played a role in her decision to live in the area pointed to George Wainborn Park on the map and said, “I wanted to live by *that* park.”

Parks are especially appreciated for their wide open landscaping where expanses of land create a sense of space and cause the parks to be perceived and used as a destination and consequent centre of community. More space targeted for older youth and teen activities, more amenities for leisure activities and more space designated to off-leash dogs with subsequent enforcement of rules are the primary improvements that residents desire.

Park size

Residents were asked if they would prefer fewer larger parks, more smaller parks, or the same size and distribution of parks as currently exists.⁷ Though responses were somewhat mixed, the majority of the residents interviewed voiced a strong appreciation for the parks as currently designed, with wide open spaces. In fact, when later asked what they most appreciated about the outdoor spaces or even what had motivated them to move to the area, several residents cited the neighbourhood’s “airiness,” “openness,” or “sense of space.” Although this could be partially attributed to the Seawall, some of the larger parks such as David Lam and George Wainborn also contribute to the ambiance. Several residents noted that the larger parks create a “destination” or area where people can “congregate,” which ultimately contributes significantly to the area’s community. In a similar vein, many residents explained that the larger parks provide more options for activities as opposed to a smaller park that might only lend itself to passive activities such as sitting. Furthermore, the larger parks are inherently flexible allowing for sports or large events such as the annual jazz festival in David Lam Park. Those who would like to see smaller parks, however, explained that they felt the smaller areas might provide for a variety of activities or might be useful for separating dog activities, allowing for more choice of off-leash options and increasing the likelihood of specified areas being respected as on-leash. Others suggest that smaller parks “break up the concrete jungle,” contribute to a “sense of a neighbourhood,” and should be used to connect the larger areas.

⁶ 16 residents were asked their overall impression of the outdoor space and what they see as the principle strengths and weaknesses.

⁷ 16 residents responded with their preference of park size.

Activities in the parks

As residents of the area began to talk about their use of the public spaces, it quickly became clear that all of the amenities provided were being well used.⁸ The tennis courts, basketball and skateboard areas were specifically praised by some who were grateful for opportunities for themselves or family members to partake in active recreation. Those interviewed who were not frequently using the outdoor spaces were all seniors, suggesting that perhaps modification could be made to improve the suitability of the parks or Seawall for their use. Additional seating for relaxing and people watching and for taking breaks during walks would be useful and are desired by many interviewees. In fact, residents of all ages say that they used the parks for relaxation purposes as well as for more active pursuits. Sitting and people watching is common practice: one couple explained that they liked to “take a cup of tea to the yellow chairs in George Wainborn Park and sit and watch the boats come up and down”. Sun tanning and reading are also enjoyed by many. The most common activities however, based on descriptions from those interviewed, are walking along the Seawall, using the playgrounds with children and frequenting the parks with dogs. The discussion of dog walking in many cases frequently led to comments that additional off-leash areas are needed by both dog-owners and non-owners alike. Running is enjoyed by False Creek North’s younger residents while both the young and older alike reported enjoying a cycle down to Stanley Park. In fact, similar to the responses from the questionnaire, most residents felt that all of their activity needs were met in the available public spaces and several were unable to think of what might be added.

Others however, believed that there is room for improvement. Barbecues, more adventurous and diverse playgrounds, open flexible space for active pursuits for adults, and an interactive water park were all desired. In addition to *more* chairs, benches and picnic tables, higher quality items were desired; one critique was severe: “the street furniture is appalling, ugly and not functional, dinky and unsafe. The total costs have to be considered, but quality and design should not be completely compromised.”

Park benches may not be the only option for stopping to relax. Several residents suggested that they would like to see some waterfront areas opened to cafés. While the topic may be a contentious one, this research seems to suggest that more residents would support the idea than oppose it, particularly if only certain areas were zoned for such use. Indeed, the European image of canals lined with restaurants and cafés acting as community centres and creating a certain vibrancy is appealing to many, and may be an option that should be reconsidered by the City pending additional engagement of residents.

Activities undertaken tended to be quite specific to each park. While David Lam Park is popular among many, families with small children tended to particularly appreciate and use the playground that was described as the most ‘adventurous’ one available because of the climbing tower and the slide. Parents also appreciated the area because it seemed to be less popular with dog owners. Many others tended only to use David Lam Park when there is a special sporting event or a festival to attend. In fact, many of those who did not frequent the playground facilities describe David Lam as “boring” or “just a playing field” with no further use.

George Wainborn Park attracted those who were looking for a quieter area to read, suntan or picnic and also dog owners. Some found that the area was overwhelmed by dogs and preferred not to use it

⁸ 16 respondents were asked which activities they do, where they do them, why they do them in a particular park and which activities they would like to do that they feel are not provided for.

because of the dog faeces. Some interviewees suggested that much of George Wainborn park should be an off-leash park since it is, in essence, a de-facto dog park. The play area in George Wainborn Park received no praise during the interviews. Appropriate landscaping could be implemented to enclose the playground area from a proposed off-leash area.

The playground underneath the Cambie Street Bridge was used occasionally by some of the residents interviewed, however those who appreciated the facilities - the covering and the rubber mat in particular - tended not to feel entirely safe there, even during the day. The Roundhouse Plaza was reported as almost never being used and was often criticized by residents who recognise its potential but are disappointed with its current state and look forward to its pending redevelopment. Several residents, primarily seniors, but also some young residents without children and dogs said that they tended not to use the parks but frequent the Seawall for cycling, walking and rollerblading.

Parks and families

All of the families interviewed appeared to be reasonably content with the provision of parks overall. One resident explained, “the benefits are, we don’t have our own back garden, but I open the door and have access to every outdoor space I could want. I have everything right out the door. I’m not dependent on my car for things for my child.” The parents of toddlers and young children found that they have all of their needs met in the area and were particularly happy with the play areas provided in the parks. A major area of concern, however was the suitability of parks for older youth, particularly children between the ages of eight and sixteen years. However, we interviewed one mother with a 12 year old daughter who expressed no particular concern about the park space although she did mention that she missed the backyard lifestyle with which she was raised and frequently visits her mother in Hope because of the space it affords. Another two respondents who were living or who had lived with teenagers in the past in FCN were sceptical about the suitability of the area for youth. One remarked “For the younger children there are number of things to do, there’s the school and a number of play facilities. But for the older children there aren’t a lot of benefits.” The other voiced similar doubts, “My family grew up in a subdivision with a backyard, and I don’t know how important that is or the lack of it for those kids that grow up here, because we spent a lot of time in our background. I wouldn’t want to raise a young child in a high-rise, but families that are doing that seem to be happy.”

The importance of youth specific play areas was emphasized by all three key informants with whom we discussed the suitability of FCN for children: the Roundhouse Youth Worker, the Principal of Elsie Roy Elementary School and the Principal of King George Secondary School. The Roundhouse Youth Worker explained that at about the age of 8 years old, children wish to be more active and desire independence and more unstructured space. These needs increase progressively into the teenage years. She also emphasized their need for “healthy risk,” which she described as climbing a tree or having opportunities to run wild, “I don’t think there are many opportunities [to develop] your skills to experience risk taking and exploring here.” Similarly, the Principals of both local schools were extremely concerned about the lack of youth-specific space. The Principal of the Elsie Roy School praised the Parks Board for recently responding to the need by adding a 'spider climbing facility' in David Lam Park but noted that the structure, although intended for older children, is equally enticing to the younger kids so the older ones rarely get on it: “So ideally, there would just be more space. The older kids need the areas, the fields for organized play and they need appealing attractive hang out areas,” she explained. She also echoed the Youth Worker’s desire to see more 'wild' and 'adventurous' landscaping explaining that the Parks Board had considered landscaping an extension of the play area with drift wood and stone and features that would allow children to climb and roost on, but such an area had not yet been implemented. The Principal of King George Secondary School

also emphasized the importance of youth space, “they [the Parks Board] need to provide that space, they need to come up with it. It's not like [the need] is going away, it's getting more intense.”

Perhaps one of the most important park services that needs to be provided to FCN youth is a play field space with organized sports leagues. The field at David Lam is used for adult programming. Both school Principals were emphatic about the importance of organized sport for youth. The Elsie Roy Principal, when asked what would be her top advice to planners, stressed the importance of planning for children of all ages,

“George Wainborn Park is the prime and most exasperating example for me,” she explains, “because it looks grand it is a lovely place to stroll and take pictures... and it is fine for toddlers because they have the play area, but it just doesn't work for kids eight and up. So I would say don't focus so much on things looking good but really think about them being functional and fun and engaging places for healthy living.”

The overall message heard by families and experts alike is that to cater to the needs of children and ensure an active and healthy lifestyle for all residents, functionality of parks must be prioritized over aesthetics.

Fountains and public art

Researchers asked interview participants about fountains because they are expensive to install and maintain and the Parks Board was interested in knowing if residents felt them to be worthwhile. In general, the residents are extremely enthusiastic about the presence of fountains in their neighbourhood.⁹ Most immediately think of the fountain in George Wainborn Park and rave about it. The comments most strongly voiced were that it added value to the neighbourhood and was a source of pride. Many noted that it was well used by dogs and children alike and almost all expressed that it is one of their favourite ‘people-watching’ spots because of the activity fostered by the presence of the fountain. Several residents did, however, differentiate between this particular fountain in George Wainborn Park, and others. Those fountains with more naturally designed features, described by one resident as “water flowing naturally over large rocks, for instance” were more appreciated than the contrived spray versions. The ‘natural’ designs were valued for being “soothing,” “relaxing” and “playful” with the sound of water and the reflection of light. Some residents, learning of the fountains' high cost, were uncertain whether the feature was worthwhile and others pointed out risks that might be associated with the structures: children falling in, vandalism, or simple neglect. Most, however, “loved” the fountains and describe them as “fantastic” and many would like more such fountains in their neighbourhood. The fountains are perceived as a sort of public art and appear to be more appreciated and less contentious than other forms of public art in the area.

Overall aesthetics

“They've done a spectacular job.” “It is amazing.” Most residents echoed such satisfaction with the general aesthetic of the neighbourhood focusing particular praise on the parks and above all, the Seawall.¹⁰ They were generous in their compliments to the designers and their appreciation of the quality landscaping, voicing such comments as: “we are so lucky,” “it is very well-planned”, and “they've done a great job”. While some noted the growing density, even calling it “overwhelming”,

⁹ 17 residents were asked their opinion about the fountains in the parks.

¹⁰ 16 respondents were asked their opinion of the area's overall aesthetic.

others were grateful that Vancouver planners have enacted more restraints on development when compared to denser cities such as Toronto or Montreal. Complaints of the park aesthetics space are minor with some suggesting a desire for more trees while simultaneously admitting that these will likely come as the existent vegetation ages.

While discussing the aesthetics of the parks, several residents commented, unprompted, on the architecture in the community. Although some appreciated the design of the buildings, many complained of the “generic look” and regret that with all of the history available elsewhere in Yaletown, the monotonous skyline of False Creek North is the most famous image of Vancouver projected to the world. Other critiques were more detailed, calling for more brick, and higher quality materials.

3.3 Mobility and Transportation

Almost all residents interviewed use the Seawall and park space to walk within the FCN community; only one stated that she often drove to run errands in her community on the way to other destinations. In all, residents with whom we spoke loved the walkability of the area and took advantage of it. Families in particular appreciated the extra time spent with children and other quality uses.

Car reliance

Part of the logic behind urban density is to maximize the potential of public transportation and to minimize the need for driving. With real estate values as high as they are, planners would be particularly happy if residents were willing to part with their cars completely so as to relieve the pressure on land with expensive parking spots. Through the interview questions, we sought to elucidate the motivation behind residents’ transportation choices. Are they giving up cars?¹¹ If yes why and if not, why not? Responses were mixed but fairly promising for the long-term vision of a car-free neighbourhood.

Those who had parted with their cars were diverse in their broader attributes and included, but were not limited to, seniors. Middle-aged couples including one with a teenage child were attempting to live in the area without a car; they found the situation challenging because their daughter didn’t attend school in the neighbourhood and most of her activities were not local. Others felt that walking, cycling, transit and car cooperatives were meeting their needs. In fact, the car cooperatives seemed to be key to motivating residents to give up their car. Others who used their car rarely explained that they “just can’t give it up completely.” Still, many reported filling up their gas tank once a month, or accumulating only around 30,000 kilometres of mileage after 4 or 5 years of ownership, including some long distance trips. For several residents, however, the draw of the car is just too great. “I enjoy driving, it is my treat to myself,” explained one resident whose stance was echoed by others. For most people, however, the car free, or at least less car dependent, life was False Creek North’s main draw: “that is why we are here!” stated one resident from San Francisco.

3.4 Shops, Facilities and Services

Although the interview schedule did not focus specifically on Shops, Facilities and Services, many residents commented on them while discussing mobility, overall satisfaction and/or suitability of the community for families. Though residents loved that they are close to so many amenities, most found that local grocery stores such as Urban Fare and Costco were

¹¹ 17 residents were asked about their transportation modes.

too expensive or too inconvenient. The majority therefore left their neighbourhood on occasion to grocery shop elsewhere in Vancouver; almost all drive to do their grocery shopping. Those who lived without cars made do with public transit to access more affordable stores in the West End. The lack of affordability was an issue for almost all interview participants regardless of income. The phenomenon not only affected retail stores but also restaurants. One participant said, “There is no variety. It is all snooty and high end. Look at the restaurants except for the Yaletown Brew Pub. Give me a dollar store; I need a dollar store in my neighbourhood.”

Families' experiences with shops, facilities and services

Accessibility to facilities and services is a major attraction to parents as it is to residents at large. Living in the downtown core offers opportunities for older children that might not be possible in the suburbs. “Everything is at your doorstep: arts and music lessons.” With their children frequenting the Vancouver Public Library Central Branch, the two parents of teenagers both explained that the services are great for that age group. The King George Principal explained that his school approaches education in novel ways because of possibilities of partnerships with museums, community centres and local businesses, “I think these students are much more connected to, savvy with their community and the public and private partnerships and facilities that are within the community.”

Affordability and diversity of local shops is an especially difficult situation for families. Parents complain that the local stores and restaurants do not have much of a family focus. By far the most significant issue for families or young couples considering having children are the lack of spaces in schools and daycares. One mother with a 21-month-old son recounted her frustration, “We are already on the waiting list for Dorothy Lam [Daycare] and another one in Kits that I'm applying to. If he can't get into daycare or school later on, that would absolutely be a reason for leaving.” Another father of a four-year-old girl was equally exasperated, “We're pretty sure she won't be able to get into Elsie Roy, which is crazy because we live like across the street. And my wife refuses to let her go to Strathcona. So we might have to go to a private school...They could have put more floors on the Elsie Roy School!”

Parents also say that the neighbourhood does not provide sufficient activities for older children, just as the park design did not provide enough space. Two interview respondents would like to see a community swimming pool. The key informants warned of the impact of now having sufficient activities for youth. The Principal of King George explains that the provision of green space in the community is okay but that it “just leads to a hang out situation - there are places to hang out for kids - but what so many of the students find is that to access things that are in the area is too expensive or it is adult-oriented so they don't provide an awful lot.” Although all residents and youth experts recognised and applauded the Roundhouse for its efforts to cater to children's needs, the general consensus was that the facility is over capacity and over committed already so more creative ideas and more committed resources are needed to fill the gap. The Principal of King George wondered why Elsie Roy School is not being used on weekends for community-oriented programming, for example.

3.5 Community Safety

When questioned about their safety in the outdoor public space, most respondents were quick to say that they felt very safe thanks to the many wide open spaces, wide sidewalks along the Seawall at David Lam Park, generally adequate lighting and the density which provides for eyes on the streets,

either from fellow pedestrians or from people in their buildings.¹² However, with further prompting, it soon became clear that for many of the interviewees, their safety is subject to certain constraints. Several women, particularly older women, were insistent that they did not and would not go outside at night and certainly not alone. Almost all of the female respondents said that they feel unsafe under the Cambie Street Bridge and/or near the construction site on that east end of the Concord development, particularly at night, but some felt insecure in those places even during the day. Some suggested that they felt somewhat nervous at night even in open areas along the Seawall or in George Wainborn Park, which one young woman noted is a problem for dog walkers who need to go out at night. Several also remarked that alleyways just north of Pacific Boulevard could be dark and intimidating and that those areas and further north along Granville could be rowdy because of bars and clubs.

While the comments on safety are overall quite positive, more care should be taken in certain sections along the Seawall that require more lighting and along the fringes of the community development (Cambie and Granville bridge) where better maintenance and lighting is required. Further, as one resident strongly vocalized, such care should not wait until construction is complete: “the fact that there is construction going on the other side of the fence is no reason to let it go to hell.” In the northwest corner of David Lam Park there is a small area that has been landscaped so as to maintain a natural design, however, several residents commented that the unruly vegetation lent them to feel unsafe. “You never know who is lurking,” commented one resident while another recounted that the spot was used by the homeless and by drug dealers: “in the morning, I’m sitting and waiting for my bus and they are dealing crack in the corner.” The answers to these problems were echoed by all respondents: add more lighting, cut back the bushes, design wide sidewalks and step up the patrols.

Families had no particular complaints about safety in their neighbourhood with regards to their children, though one father said that when his teenage daughter was commuting to university in Surrey he worried about her at that end and sometimes at the *Stadium* Skytrain Station when there were games on. Overall though, he and other parents felt that though they were aware of risk but felt it to be minimal.

3.6 The Building

Are residents conscious of living in a high-density community?

Living in a dense neighbourhood did not pose a problem for anyone which may not be surprising considering that these people had self-selected to live in FCN.¹³

Some people actually were not consciously aware of living in high-density because they never saw anyone from their building, never heard others either outside the building or from within, or never smelled anything in the hallways from other units. Clearly different senses trigger the perception of density to different people. Smaller buildings were also not considered “high” density by some of the participants who lived in smaller buildings.¹⁴ The FOB security system that most buildings have also added to the perception of privacy and exclusivity as residents would usually only see the people from their floor.

¹² 15 residents were asked about how safe they feel in the public space alone, in groups, during the day and at night. They were also asked what they believe adds or detracts from a sense of safety.

¹³ All 20 participants were asked if they were conscious of living in a high-density neighbourhood when they were in their unit.

¹⁴ Less than 10 stories.

For those who were aware of density, most appreciated the fact - “I moved to the city to be with other people” and “I like hearing people noises out on the street, it makes me feel like something is always going on” were comments that typified this response. A couple participants even mentioned that they wished that they were more explicitly aware of living in a multi-family neighbourhood - “I never see anyone from my building, there’s no sense of community here” residents of both Crestmark 1 and Parkview Towers replied.

The pioneers of FCN who had lived there for over 10 years noted the dramatic change in density and activity in the time that they had been there but this did not dramatically affect their satisfaction. One could even find some tranquility in the much loved and used FCN park system (including the Seawall) early mornings on weekends which was a favourite time to stroll for one of the participants. It would appear that a flexibility in schedules may allow residents to distribute their use of the public spaces to times of less intensity thereby maximizing their overall use.

FOB security feature

Nearly all participants had this security feature.¹⁵ Most people appreciated it for the security reasons but nearly all of these also articulated the fact that it prevented people from freely visiting their neighbours on other floors as all, save one, who had a FOB system had restricted floor access. Many of the participants were acutely aware of the tradeoffs of high security. The FOB system was viewed as preventing communication and a sense of community between the floors, something that was important to more than half the participants. Because all recognized the need for such a security feature, they suggested that “other things be done to counteract the alienating consequences of the FOB.” The resident of the co-op pointed out how important it was in her building that children have free access within it because many children had friends within the building. When asked what she particularly liked about her building, the sense of community was the primary attribute. She hoped that installation of the FOB in her building would not jeopardize that access for her teenage daughter.

Beyond this there were logistical benefits of allowing for easy communication between floors. One woman pointed out that she had two floods in one week and that she had no way of getting in touch with the people on the floors above; this had made an already difficult situation more frustrating. One resident of a high-rise said that she thought the FOB was a good measure in a high-rise tower where people don’t know each other so well, but that restricted floor access is not necessary or appropriate in smaller more intimate buildings.

One resident of Aquarius 1 articulated clearly that there are better security measures than FOBs, locks and cameras: “Our complex is very well secured, but there are some people for whom security is never enough. We’ve done a good job until this point, but there’s no substitute for those eyes on the street. I want to live in a building where we feel like if we see a problem we can report it to one another.”

¹⁵ 17 participants were asked if they had a FOB system in your building and what they liked or disliked about it. The two residents in each social housing and the co-op didn’t originally but have had it installed or will have one soon.

Details that could be improved with the security system include a longer period of time to let visitors enter the building and make their way to the elevator after being buzzed in, not needing the FOB to let visitors out of the parkade, and being able to take the stairs up from the lobby.¹⁶

Parking

All except one participant had a parking stall and five participants had two even though four out of the twenty participants didn't own a car.¹⁷ Those who didn't own a car appreciated having the spot for visitors, co-op cars or as a resale feature.

All people who owned their unit said that parking came with it and were happy for this; they would not have liked having the option of purchasing it on top of their unit. The participant in the co-op said that parking was grossly inadequate in her building and that the City shouldn't "assume that just because we're in non-market housing that we don't have things like cars. Living in a co-op is meant to help us save money so that we can live a regular life which might mean using a car." Aside from this participant, however, parking one's one vehicle was not a major issue.

No one said they felt unsafe in the parkade. Reasons they gave included: the lighting, the number and proximity of exits and the location of the spot in the parkade - "my spot is far down in the parkade away from the gate where thieves might lurk" one gentleman replied. While nearly every building had problems with break-ins at some point, most people did not seem to be overly concerned; removing anything of value and leaving one's door unlocked were commonly used mitigation strategies to break-ins.

It was also noted, however, that having shared retail and residential parking with no security gate between the uses was a bad idea. Two participants out of sixteen said they worried about the safety of their vehicle simply because of the sheer number of break-ins. Nearly all respondents mentioned their building policy of waiting until the parkade gate was down until entering or exiting the parkade to ensure unwanted people didn't enter. The fact that not all residents followed this policy is an on-going concern in many of the buildings and has resulted in some tension among residents between those who think it's important and those who don't. To overcome this problem, one participant mentioned that they will be investing quite a bit of money to install a second gate and that this could easily and less expensively been done at the building's conception. In general, though, there seemed to be this sort of conscious resolve not to become paranoid about security at the building scale.

Visitor parking

Visitor parking was a topic of much discussion among nearly all participants because they generally found it to be a hassle.¹⁸ Nearly all used a parking pass system in which to let a visitor in to the secured parking, the resident must come down to the street, let the visitor in and place a pre-issued pass on their dashboard. When the visitor is ready to leave, the resident must accompany the visitor

¹⁶ One woman pointed out that she simply likes taking the stairs up to her unit and that it is sometimes necessary when the elevator is broken or occupied, but that she does not have this option because of the FOB security.

¹⁷ 19 participants were asked if they had secured parking in their building and what they used it for.

¹⁸ 19 participants were asked how the visitor parking was handled in their building and how they felt about that.

out to collect the pass and let them out of the parkade. Some buildings had different spots, passes and registration protocols depending on the length of stay of the visitor.¹⁹

Most participants we spoke with found the pass system to be a real hassle that was exacerbated by the fact that they could not even guarantee that there would be an available spot for the visitor once they entered the parkade. The number of stalls for visitors was generally described as “grossly inadequate”, a problem that was made more frustrating because of the number of stalls reserved 24H for other uses²⁰ and the fact that at any one time there were generally many unoccupied stalls within the parkade. One participant said that arranging parking for her visitors in her building around the holidays was a source of conflict among building residents. Another said that he used the unoccupied private parking stalls and simply put a note on the dashboard with his phone number if anyone has a problem, which no one ever had. For others, the ordeal of arranging parking within the building is so much of a bother that they simply tell their guests to park on the street which in itself has also become more of an issue because of the increase in metered spots. One respondent had noticed that another resident was renting out their private parking pass and this was a security concern to him. Another noted that she gave her parking FOB and pass to her emergency contact in the event that person had to reach her quickly and as a result she had no formal means of accommodating the parking of her guests. One participant in 2 Park West commented on the poorly thought out design of nexus between visitor parking and garbage truck access to the garbage facilities. Because there isn’t enough space for the garbage truck to get to the bin, two valued visitor parking spots have to be blocked off the night before garbage collection.

Participants suggested the following to make their experiences with visitor parking easier:

- Allow for other means of communicating the visitor’s right to be in the parking space. Visitors could write a note with a unit and phone number or register the car with the concierge in buildings that have one;
- Allow unused (even private) parking stalls to be used by visitors and trades people;
- Have a specific area for trades people that has adequate unloading space and is near the elevators.

Building storage

A lack of storage was a common source of dissatisfaction. We asked participants if they would like the option of using their parking stalls for storage, even though we recognize that this is currently not permitted by City bylaws.²¹ Half said that they wouldn’t like to use parking stalls for storage because of the fire hazards, the unsightliness of it and the fact that it might further attract thieves. The other half said that they would at least like the option as they are renting storage elsewhere in the city for a hefty price. Another participant noted that it would be helpful if even small fire resistant storage cabinets were installed for one to store small vehicle related items like washer fluid.

To overcome the safety hazards, one participant suggested the use of small (apparently plentiful) cargo containers that are twenty feet in length and five feet across. He in fact hopes to present these ideas to the City. He was quite disappointed with the more than adequate provision of parking in Yaletown which becomes obvious, he noted, when “you go through the levels and see that half the spaces are empty. Vancouver is one of the best in North America in getting a better balance of

¹⁹ This was quite confusing to at least one of the participants.

²⁰ Which appeared to never be used two participants from different buildings noted.

²¹ 16 participants were asked this question.

walking in the downtown area, but we want to compare Vancouver to the world on these standards and one of the biggest mistakes they've made, that counteract the walk/car balances, is the mandatory provision of parking in the buildings." Using parking spaces more flexibly to accommodate more uses is an essential indirect step to being consistent with Vancouver's aspiration of being a walkable liveable city in his estimation.

Indoor building amenities

There were a wide range of amenities identified by participants including: pool, hot tub, sauna, gym, billiard room, theatre room, business rooms, meeting rooms, large room with catering facilities for special events, guest suites and concierge.²² Older buildings tended to have fewer amenities and the social housing and co-op had had amenities like laundry and general-purpose rooms but little else. The level of use of the amenities tended to be a function of personality.

Many who didn't use their amenities simply noted that they had no use for them. The concierge was cited as a much-appreciated amenity by those who had one. Three participants explicitly noted that a concierge can really set the atmosphere of the building - "They're an important element, they really set a tone. If you have a rule-bound concierge everyone will either go by the book or everyone will start looking how they can bend the rules and things can get nasty real fast. It important that the concierge be flexible enough within reason" the resident in Aquarius 1 noted.

Sharing amenities across buildings was not cited as a barrier to anyone's use.²³ Those with guest suites said they were very popular. Some buildings had considered turning the common rooms into guest suites but that the legal hurdles were too great. One renter absolutely loved her amenity package and said that it would make moving next to impossible. Her building even had a squash court which was used to hold league games at the building scale; this was greatly appreciated as it gave her an opportunity to meet with other people in her building. The participant from Waterworks said the amenity package was one of the reasons she decided to buy where she did. The participant from Marina Side Resort had a library in his building which he noticed was used by children as a study and tutoring room. This participant, who ran a business from his home, also used the boardroom to hold business related meetings.

When asked what could be done to encourage use of the amenity rooms, programming was high on the list for amenity rooms that had no set function. Programming of spaces and hosting of events could make them more useable and could encourage interaction among building residents. One resident mentioned the success of "Bond" or "Canucks" nights in the theatre room of another building that allowed some of the (mostly) men in the building get together rather than going to the pub. Many of the buildings, however, did have seasonal social events organized by building management that were generally poorly attended. The fact that a number of residents were enthusiastic about attending events with a specific purpose (like games, crafts, movies or children's activities) may suggest that building scale social events might be more popular and better attended if they have a theme and are spearheaded by a resident.

One mother mentioned that she would use the fitness room more if there were toys or something to keep her child occupied while she used the equipment. The participant from the co-op mentioned that the price of the deposit and the hassle associated with booking the room was a deterrent to

²² All 20 participants were asked about their satisfaction with their indoor amenities.

²³ Although one woman who has them in her building said that she might not use them as much if they had to cross outside to get to them.

using it. Also not having an intercom in the amenity room made it difficult to let people in which added to her dissatisfaction with the use of the space. One resident from Icon 1 pointed out that she thought her building was well designed to encourage chances of meeting up. The billiard room was placed in such a way that people had to pass through it to get to some of the other amenities. She appreciated this aspect because she had witnessed informal gatherings congregate from chance encounters in that room. She also noted that having things like dishes in the party room might make it more usable. Finally, one resident said she didn't use some of her amenities like the general amenity rooms because she didn't know what she was allowed to use them for.

Semi-private open space

All participants, except one from the Alda, had semi-private open space provided as part of their building.²⁴ As with individual units, there was clearly a wide range in open space types described. However, one key message did emerge: These outdoor amenity spaces are notoriously underutilized and are considered “dead spaces” by the residents we spoke to. Most said they were poorly used because of lack of programming, lack of outdoor furniture such as benches,²⁵ unimaginative or not enough children's play equipment,²⁶ play equipment that is tailored only to toddlers and young children,²⁷ too much landscaping,²⁸ lack of sunlight and the feeling that they were infringing on someone's front lawn²⁹ (for those that had their building's outdoor space in the area of the interior-facing townhomes).

The participant from the Crestmark 1 noted that the landscaping had been shaped to be hummocky and ornamental which limited active use of the space. From observing other people use semi-private outdoor spaces in other countries, she said “there's no doubt in my mind that people would use it if it was designed for actual uses. We are social beings and we are being prevented from being social.” For her, flexibility was essential to these spaces being used.

Other participants noted that they didn't use the space because they had adequate private patio space, they partook in recreational activities outside of the City on weekends or that the parks and seawall system “across the street” was a preferred place to spend outdoors in the area. One participant said that she didn't know what activities were allowed in the space and so she didn't use it. The participant from the co-op noted that “If I wanted to use that sort of space, I go to my parents' place in Hope with a real backyard and our own BBQ and a real hot tub. That's how I was brought up. That's the only way you can have the best of both worlds.” Only one resident, from the Waterworks building, said she used the space frequently and that was for sitting and reading. Two things that she thought could be changed to increase use would be to allow alcohol in the space and allow residents to bring more than four guests down with them.

Furniture and programming to encourage use of semi-private open spaces could include:

- Tables and chairs, with umbrella;
- Installation of a BBQ in buildings that don't already have one;
- Lawn games like botchy ball;
- Checkerboard benches and tables;

²⁴ All 20 participants were asked about their satisfaction with their outdoor amenities.

²⁵ Parkview Towers

²⁶ 1099

²⁷ Roundhouse Co-op

²⁸ Crestmark 1

²⁹ 1099

- Allowing for flexibility of use (i.e. rules that permit a variety of uses within reason);
- Promotion of activities that can go on in the space.

Community in buildings

When asked about opportunities to meet neighbours in their building through the use of common spaces, residents' responses were mixed in their evaluation of current opportunities. Almost all, however, agreed that such opportunities and an overall sense of neighbourliness in the building was important to them. One resident emphasized that neighbourly interactions create a sense of security for all who are living in the building. Although a minority, some of the residents interviewed feel little community and are satisfied with such an arrangement, "oddly, I probably wouldn't really want that (sense of community)," explained one resident, "I appreciate my anonymity." Interestingly, of the five residents with a similar viewpoint, two are among those who know and visit the most people in their building suggesting that they may express this viewpoint because they already had so much contact with neighbours. A few residents expressed doubt that community could be fostered at all in high rise living, "one of the things I've discovered about condo living is that people don't want to get too close. I think they're frightened that if they get too close and then realise that they don't like the person, they're in an impossible situation."

Building amenities and spaces to build community

Although a few residents believed that certain amenity spaces such as the gym or pool provide chances to meet neighbours others are not convinced that they are particularly effective as a tool to promote neighbourly interaction. Some point out that exercising is generally not conducive to socializing, particularly as many people work out with headphones. Frequently the design of gym space exacerbates this given that machines are lined in a row or facing the television or a window. As one resident explained, "exercising is a very insular kind of thing. So you need something to bring people together." In gyms, design may make a significant difference as one resident explained that the design in her gym made it easy to chat with people, although she did not elaborate on what this meant. Several residents suggested that design and management needed to be adapted to promote informal interactions. One resident found that a lack of attention to this made it difficult for both her and her teenage daughter to meet neighbours,

"Most rooms you book individually so you don't run into each other. I have seen teenagers coming in at the end of school days, but then we don't see them again for the rest of the day. There's no common space where they could get together. One of the other buildings has a pool table that is going in to where all the sports facilities are and I think that because it's by where people walk by, there's more of a chance that people might stop in and play. Whereas in ours we actually have to book it and get the key. It's not easily accessible."

However, while most residents said that they would like more opportunity to interact with neighbours and suggested that organized activities are the most effective way of promoting neighbourly interaction, most were also sensitive to time factors. "People are busy," admitted one resident while another checked her own enthusiasm: "But then you say who's going to do that? It takes a think tank, a group of people, with time and a commitment." Another had been involved in such organizing tasks in the past in the co-operative building where community feeling seemed to be stronger and echoed this sentiment: "I would appreciate if there was more of an effort made, but I also appreciate that everyone else is busy. Like, I think - don't pick me!" In some buildings it is clear

that some degree of effort is being made. In one building, a resident volunteered to give yoga classes by donation, and parents had in the past worked to promote a games night in the recreation room with the ping-pong table and other activities.

Varying experiences of community

Residents' experiences of community in the building are again dependent on many factors. Older buildings with many long time residents tended to have a core group that know one another well. Some long-term residents of more than ten years, claimed to chat with and know the names of dozens of people and even visit with some neighbours in their homes. For others, the building is a friendly place, neighbours smile at one another, but the congeniality remains superficial. Those with the most positive experiences of community in the building live in buildings that have been around for longer and in co-operatives. One resident living in a co-operative explains her perception of the difference,

“It [the building] is smaller in terms of height, but there are more people in an accessible small area - more units per floor. When we lived in the high-rise, we knew all four neighbours, but we never saw them. We couldn't wait to move in here because now my daughter has all her friends in the building.”

From residents' comments, it appears that the building layout, the lack of a FOB security system (soon to be implemented) and the presence of a large percentage of children and families encourage a much stronger sense of community in the co-operative building. This finding suggests that families grouped together likely offers more support and social outlets for residents. It is worth more research to investigate what characteristics contribute to community in the co-operative so as to try to replicate it in market-rate buildings.

Factors detracting from sense of community at the building scale

When asked to identify barriers to community in their building, many residents thought of the FOB security systems, which allow residents to access their floor and common areas only. Residents were not, however, willing to give up their security for community but would like to see ways to maintain safety without detracting from community at the building scale.

A few residents commented that renters detract from community because they are not as invested and because they tended to be more transient. A long-term renter presented a very different perspective: “As a renter in a strata, I feel like a second class citizen. It is just the nature of the situation, you don't have a say in how things are run. No one makes me feel bad. I'd just like a way to have a say in what goes on because it's no less my home just because I rent.”

Many who did feel a strong sense of community in their building believed that it has been fostered by hardship that the residents have had to endure together; “The fact that the building is aging and needs up-keep, causes people to come together to discuss it.” One resident said that they had to sue Concord Pacific and the occasion really brought them together. On the flip side, as long as everything was running smoothly, residents had little motive to interact, “Our building has never had any major problems so our council AGMs are poorly attended,” explained another resident.

The concierge appears to be the most popular person in the building and often a key to setting a friendly and open tone, “the concierge greets people as they come in and out and definitely establishes the mood of the building.” Many residents commented on how much they appreciate the concierge service; nobody had negative comments. One woman illustrated her appreciation particularly clearly. “He know us - all our names, knows me and my schedule. That makes a huge difference. And because he’s so friendly, I think everyone feels friendlier. We was away for a little while and it made a big difference - I was SO happy when he was back - we almost hugged!”

Building strengths

Not surprisingly, the location of the building was the biggest strength across all respondents; the people we spoke with moved to FCN so that they could be near other amenities such as work, the ocean, shops and services or the parks system.

But aside from the siting of FCN in relation to Vancouver, some participants mentioned that they found the actual siting of the building in the development to be a strength in that it was “set off” from the rest of Yaletown which provided better views and was quieter. In particular, the participant from 2 Park West said: “I really like driving into my neighbourhood, the park and the water. It’s like wow - I love it every time I come out my door. I also like that it’s one block of Pacific - off the busy street. Not that I would mind a coffee shop or something, but it’s enough off the main road that it feels almost like I’m in a suburb.”

Following location, amenities³⁰ and the design of the building³¹ itself were rated as the biggest strengths. The building grounds,³² maintenance,³³ and friendliness of building management³⁴ were also acknowledged by more than one participant. The resident from the Roundhouse co-op said that her building’s greatest strength was that “there is definitely a community.” One resident particularly appreciated the low renter turnover in her building.

Two participants said that they were indifferent to the building.

Building weaknesses

There were no uniform weaknesses across all participant responses. Participants each highlighted different things that they were unsatisfied with which included things such as the rules imposed by building councils, the visitor parking pass system, on-going construction and repair projects, single elevators, noise, the longevity of certain systems within the building and in particular the roof membrane, and one that had an on-going sewage smell in the parkade.

3.7 The Unit

The following results are based on a sample size of twenty. A little over half the participants lived in two-bedroom units or larger. Eight participants had enclosed balconies and seven had more than one balcony (including the enclosed balcony).

³⁰ Waterworks, Parkview Towers (mainly the pool)

³¹ 2 Park West, Crestmark 1, Pacific Place 2

³² 2 Park West, Parkwest 1

³³ 1099, Parkwest 1

³⁴ Peninsula, Parkwest 1

Table 5.5.7: Distribution of unit types, in-depth interview

Unit type	
Studio	0
1bdrm	1
1bdrm + den	7
2bdrm	2
2bdrm + den	7
3bdrm or bigger	2

A series of questions were asked about specific features and attributes of their unit including: layout/floor plan, balcony, floor-to-ceiling windows, amount of sunlight, visual privacy and noise. These were features that came up quite often in the questionnaire or at the SpeakOut as points of dissatisfaction.

Layout/floor plan

There was clearly a wide range in layout types described which makes comparisons for this question difficult with such a limited sample.³⁵ However, a few key themes did emerge such as the need for: storage (both general and specific, such as larger kitchen cabinets), good use of space in the design of the unit's layout, and more private location of private rooms such as bedrooms and bathrooms in relation to the rest of the unit. An overarching theme that arose from the participants was the desire to be able to use their limited spaces to their maximum potential.

While not having enough space in general was the most commonly cited point of dissatisfaction when asked explicitly about their satisfaction with their layout, participants were generally good-natured about their unit in this respect. Nearly all recognized that smaller living space was an inevitable result of choosing to live in multi-family housing and had adjusted their lifestyles to fit this. A commonly held view, however, was that unit (and building) space should be used more creatively, flexibly and efficiently. Of the participants that had lived abroad, two mentioned how different countries (Japan and Germany) were more effective at maximizing limited space, particularly for storage. In suite storage was a highly valued attribute of those units that had it, and the lack of which was a major point of dissatisfaction for those who didn't. One participant claimed that a lack of storage space was one reason why she didn't recycle as much as she could - "you need a place to store the recycling before you take it down to the garbage room." Many people were renting storage lockers within their buildings or paying hefty prices at storage places elsewhere.³⁶

In addition to general storage for the large household items like vacuums, bread makers and children's sports equipment, a common complaint was the lack of enough specific storage spaces such as drawers and cabinets in the kitchen, linen closets and master bedroom closets. For one elderly woman, having all her cabinet space high up was perceived as unsafe because she felt uncomfortable getting on a stool to reach her items stored there. Three participants pointed out that their long narrow "walk-in" closets were so poorly designed that they could not get into the closet to retrieve their items. For those who renovated, at least two said this was one of the first things they changed.

Finally, one participant noted as her major point of dissatisfaction that her (one) bedroom was very small ("too small to fit a queen sized bed in with night tables in either side") and that the floor-to-

³⁵ All 20 participants were asked explicitly about their satisfaction with their layout and floor plan.

³⁶ Storage is discussed further in the section on building storage.

ceiling windows actually made the room feel smaller because they removed a sense of privacy; so much so that she had to get dressed in the living room.

One of the most inefficient uses of space perceived by residents who lived in “L-shaped” or traditional compartmentalized units, was the presence of “too many hallways” which made the unit feel smaller and in some cases, darker. “I’ve been in units of similar square footage that felt much bigger” was a common comment from those who lived in such units. Almost everyone we interviewed appreciated the open concept of the living room and kitchen, so much so that three participants had renovated to open their kitchen up to the living room. Separate small kitchens were highly disliked by participants, a couple of which thought that the kitchens were not designed for cooking because of the acute lack of food preparation space.³⁷

Bedrooms and bathrooms were considered by many to be rooms that required more privacy and therefore should not come directly out on to the foyer or living areas wherever possible. Those with more than one bedroom also preferred that the bedrooms not be adjacent to each other. On-suite bathrooms to bedrooms were appreciated by all those who had them. The one person we interviewed who had a townhouse particularly appreciated that not only one, but two bedrooms had on-suite bathrooms which was a much appreciated feature when his teenage daughter first occupied the space, and now guests.

While some appreciated the aesthetics of unconventional shaped walls and windows, it made arranging standard furniture in smaller apartments particularly inflexible. Even those units with rooms of standard dimensions found there was only one placement of standard furniture. The installation of pocket doors was suggested by one woman whose doors were in the way of her dining room furniture. One person had their fireplace right next to the window which made arranging furniture extremely awkward. Further, some the finer details of design, such as the placement of electrical outlets and overhead light fixtures, were not conducive to the placement of standard type furniture. One participant had such an odd dining room light fixture that it would suggest that the dining room table should extend well into the adjacent hallway. This participant noted that overhead light fixtures were a necessary feature in small units because they reduced the need for lamps that take up space.

In total, a quarter of the participants mentioned that they had either made renovations or were going to. Some renovations were as simple as removing the glass door from the enclosed balconies or interior “glass dens” to make them part of the living space. Aesthetic changes were also very common such as replacing carpet with hardwood flooring. At least three participants had, were in the process or were going to make such drastic renovations that nothing of the original floor plan would remain. In general, having a unit that lent itself well to renovations was a source of satisfaction. Renters and people in co-ops clearly had less flexibility because they are generally not permitted to renovate.

A general lack of flexibility in the unit design was a source of accepted dissatisfaction among nearly all participants. One person noted that the lack of flexibility in furniture arrangement and use over time was one reason why they had shopped around for another unit (still in the area of FCN). What he found was that all units in their price range displayed the same inflexibility and that anything bigger and more flexible was significantly bigger and thus also much more expensive. From his experience, it would appear that there is a jump in sizes (and therefore also prices) from a 1200 square foot two bedroom (which is what he had) to very large units of greater than 2000 square feet.

³⁷ Gas ranges however were greatly appreciated by those that had them.

Clearly a better range of sizes could be provided to meet a range of needs. In the end, he and his family decided that flexibility was not so important as to merit spending a small fortune.

Balconies

A number of people had more than one balcony or a balcony and enclosed balcony.³⁸ The participants who had enclosed balconies were nearly 50/50 split on their preference of them. Some loved it and used it as an office, dining room or solarium. While others felt that it was a waste of space because its function was unclear. These participants felt that an enclosed balcony is neither an indoor or outdoor space and is a compromise of both. At the very least, these respondents thought that residents should have the option of renovating the space to make it more functional and that City bylaws should be modified to reflect this.

Everyone who had an open balcony appreciated it. A few people mentioned how much they appreciated having glass or Lucite as the balcony “wall” material because they could see through and it gave the impression of a larger space, not being penned in, or was just nice to look through. Some specific features of open balconies in need of improvement include the coarse flooring material which a couple participants mentioned was difficult to keep clean because it shredded most sponges and clothes. In a couple cases the balconies were not designed for drainage so things like cleaning the balcony and watering plants was made difficult because the water drains down to the balconies below.

Additional bathrooms

Nine people had one bathroom, eight had two bathrooms and the remaining three participants had more than two bathrooms.³⁹ All in all, those with second bathrooms were very happy with them. Additional bathrooms were noted by more than one parent as being indispensable when having children - “particularly teenagers!” one mother exclaimed. A few participants with multiple bathrooms found that multiple *full* bathrooms (with tub) were unnecessary. One unit was so extreme as to have three full bathrooms for three bedrooms. This was seen as an unforgivable waste of space when space is at such a premium.

Floor-to-ceiling windows

All participants appreciated large windows for the fact that one could put things on the sills, or that they served as good places for pets to sit and because they added much needed light, but some participants thought they are not appropriate in bedrooms.⁴⁰ The participant mentioned earlier who could not get dressed in her bedroom because of lack of space also had windows with a glass panel that only opened on the top of the window. Because she had vertical blinds over her floor-to-ceiling windows, which blocked ventilation when the blinds were drawn, she had the choice of either ventilation or privacy which was a very undesirable compromise particularly in the summer when her unit could be quite warm. Floor-to-ceiling windows in the bedroom also constrained flexibility in furniture arrangement in rooms that may already be quite small. One participant mentioned that she didn’t like looking up into units that had floor-to-ceiling windows and seeing underneath their cabinets and beds and the like; she felt like that was an invasion of privacy. One participant

³⁸ 19 participants were asked about their satisfaction with their balcony.

³⁹ All 11 participants with more than one bathroom were asked about their satisfaction with their second bathroom and if they would rather use that space for other uses.

⁴⁰ All 20 participants were asked about their satisfaction with their floor to ceiling or large windows. All participants had floor-to-ceiling or nearly floor-to-ceiling windows in one or more rooms of their unit.

suggested the use of half walls or floor-to-ceiling windows for only half of the length of the room which could mitigate many of these concerns.

The majority of the participants reported looking out their windows at the goings on below as a source of satisfaction and entertainment.⁴¹ There was an overall appreciation for all those eyes on the street from surrounding buildings and indeed many of the respondents themselves acknowledged that they contribute to that surveillance. One person mentioned that it made her feel connected to her community and what's going on. Two elderly women commented on the importance of having low windows with interesting things to look at if they became less mobile - "it would give me something to do and make me feel less lonely." A couple participants mentioned having called the police when they saw something happening, like a fire in the park or a beating in their courtyard, only to discover that the incidences had already been called in.

Amount of sunlight

Overwhelmingly respondents were pleased with their amount of sunlight and if anything said that they had too much.⁴² This was a benefit in the winter in a climate that is notoriously cloudy most of the year, and resulted in participants turning on their heat very rarely. This posed a problem in the summer, however, when the heat could be unbearable, particularly for those in the higher floors. Few reported having air conditioners and most participants said they wish they had one, or had them and used them extensively (one participant had four). Most participants thought more could have been done to mitigate these effects when the units were constructed such as installing UV controlled glass films or overhangs. For those with hot sunny apartments, the construction of new buildings in close proximity was almost a relief as it shaded their unit.

Visual intrusion

For most of the participants visual privacy is not an issue and many commented good-naturedly on the "mutual understanding" everyone living in high-rise has with regard to peering into other's windows.⁴³ Participants recognized this as an expected part of high-rise living. Mitigation measures included: drawing the blinds/curtains and angling the windows in a certain direction so to deflect visibility. Only one woman said that visual intrusion bothered her enough to keep her curtains drawn all the time.

Noise

The noise level from within unit (room-to-room noise) was unanimously not a problem for anyone we interviewed.⁴⁴ Some appliances did, however, make a lot of noise and had to be replaced such as the dishwasher in an open concept kitchen and the fans in the bathroom of the Aquarius 1 building which were unreasonably loud. It would seem that smaller spaces in particular could benefit from quiet appliances and fixtures.

Overall, the noise levels between units was less of a concern to participants than noise from outside the building. Activities and design that did result in unsatisfactory noise levels were maintenance and repair from neighbouring units (of which some buildings had been undergoing for years - related

⁴¹ 18 participants were asked if they found themselves looking out their windows observing the goings-on of the neighbourhood.

⁴² 18 participants were asked about their satisfaction with the amount of sunlight in their unit.

⁴³ All 20 participants were asked if visual intrusion from other units or the public realm was a concern.

⁴⁴ All 20 participants were asked if noise was an issue from within their unit.

to leaky condo repairs, or personal renovations) and hardwood and tile floors above units. This may be an ongoing source of dissatisfaction to many of the residents of FCN as it sounds like the conversion of flooring types to hardwood is only increasing.

Two participants mentioned that they actually heard less from their neighbours than they would have expected or had experienced in other multi-family buildings. It is important to note however, that a large number of respondents in market housing lived in corner units which was explicitly recognized as reducing neighbour noise.

Two participants were more displeased with the noise levels from other units than the rest of the participants: One from Pacific Place 2 noted that there was a “sever lack of attention to soundproofing between units.” The second was the resident from the co-op housing who said that the pipes, placement of balconies next to bedrooms and general wall insulation lent to them hearing all sorts of things especially instruments being played in the building or someone flushing water down pipes. This did not seem to be as acute a problem in most of the market units nor in the social housing unit which was reported as being quite quiet.

The noise from outside is a problem for some, particularly those who live on Pacific Boulevard. With a degree of resignation, many said that they had more or less gotten used to the traffic noise but that it was unbearable for guests who came to visit. The standard use of sirens on ambulances late at night was seen by some to be unnecessary when it was likely that few cars were on the road at that time anyway. Overall, many couldn’t understand the rationale in having such a major thoroughfare in a residential neighbourhood and thought that it was not only a source of noise, dust and pollution, but that it was also ugly, dangerous and that it interrupted the flow from the rest of the city. The noise from the completed Skytrain was also anticipated to be an added source of noise for a few participants. Those who faced the water or pedestrian thoroughfares rated the noise levels from outside quite low or that they were only “people noises” which more than one participant enjoyed hearing.

Unit’s ability to meet residents’ changing needs

Most participants, renters included, noted that their unit was “fine for now” but that if they were to grow in number, if children got older, or if participants were even to acquire “more stuff”, then they would likely not be able to stay in their current units. A young woman said that her and her partner were considering having a child and they would like to move to a townhouse in the same area. Availability at the daycare and local school(s) was a determinant for families with young children but less so for families with teenagers who were given some choice to where they could go to school. Many couldn’t understand why the planners didn’t foresee the need for more school space (“the school could even be built a little higher!” one noted).

Many owners noted that despite some deficiencies, their unit met their changing needs because they had made or could make renovations if things needed to be changed; “that’s the beauty of homeownership” one enthusiastic renovator noted.⁴⁵ Two elderly women (one in social housing, the other in market) appreciated the fact that the unit had wide doors that could accommodate wheelchairs and they saw this feature as accommodating their changing needs should they require the use of a wheelchair. Another elderly woman living alone noted that she felt somewhat isolated in her building and that she worried what she would do if she became incapacitated because her neighbours would likely not notice. Empty nesters noted that having something like a guest suite

⁴⁵ 19 participants were asked if they expected their unit to meet their, and their family’s where appropriate, changing needs over time.

service in the building could help to meeting changing needs like having children, grandchildren and parents come to visit.

Unit strengths⁴⁶

Strangely enough, although layout and size were mentioned as points of dissatisfaction by more than half the participants when asked directly how individuals felt about their layout and floor plan, layout was cited by nine participants as being a major unit *strength*; three of these made specific mention of the openness of the kitchen to the living room as being a good use of space. This may suggest that while certain elements of the layout could benefit from improvement, general functionality is not impaired. Unsurprisingly, view was one of the top strengths followed by the amount of light, the quietness and newness of the suite and those that had in-suite storage loved it. Those with three bedrooms noted that the size was a strength and two in two-bedrooms mentioned that the size of their master bedrooms was more than satisfactory. Two of the participants with large open balconies rated theirs as the major strengths. Other positive characteristics voiced by only one participant each include the following: ventilation, *lack* of air conditioning, wheel chair accessibility, finishings, privacy, warmth retention, no direct sun and location of laundry facilities in the bathroom.

Unit weaknesses

Three participants said their unit didn't have any weaknesses, two of which had renovated it to their liking. Unit weaknesses tended to be more particular to the participants. Layout was again at the top of the list of unit weaknesses, but with only three participants citing this. All three made explicit reference to either the "odd shape" or "too many hallways" that caused them to rate the layout so poorly. Size was also cited by only three participants as being a weakness of the unit (these are not the same who cited layout) two of which said that they only needed in the range of 25-50 more square feet. A lack of general storage space in the unit was an issue for two of the participants, but in addition to that four participants found the lack of specific storage spaces such as kitchen cabinets and closets to be a major weakness. Among other weaknesses were the noise from other units and Pacific Boulevard, pollution from Pacific Boulevard, inefficient heating and toilets, low energy efficiency of appliances, floor-to-ceiling windows for privacy and ventilation reasons, enclosed balcony, no air conditioning, low quality fixtures, and Concord's responsiveness to resident complaints which was cited by two participants.

3.8 Perceived Sustainability of FCN

The residents of FCN that we interviewed were concerned about the environmental sustainability of their individual and community-wide actions.⁴⁷ Sustainability and environmental impacts were not areas of inquiry pursued in the other methods of this study, but because environmental concerns were voiced at the SpeakOut and are increasingly becoming recognized as a critical constraint in which to plan, we decided to give the interview participants a chance to discuss these issues in the context of FCN.

⁴⁶ All 20 participants were asked to list their unit's strengths and weaknesses.

⁴⁷ 15 participants were asked about their perceptions on the sustainability of FCN and what improvements, if any, could be made to enhance it's sustainability.

Participants' definition of sustainability

We began by asking participants what sustainability meant to them and if they thought FCN was sustainable. A wide range of definitions were given, the most common of which emphasized the environmental dimension of sustainability - "Sustainability to me means trying not to be wasteful - being efficient and mindful of our impacts and footprint on the Earth. It means not selling the future short" typified the responses. Many however recognized that sustainability means different things to different people and that there are economic, social and health dimensions that must also be considered. Having a wide range of age demographics for instance adds to the community's stability and sustainability. Having a range of stores that reflect the range of incomes in the community and having stores that meet basic needs ("not six doggie boutiques from which you can buy your dog a little pink coat") also adds to the social and economic sustainability of FCN. The active lifestyle of walking to meet most daily needs, jogging on the Seawall and the general orientation to healthy and organic food in many of the stores, particularly Urban Fare, was noted as adding to one's personal sustainability and health.

Participants' assessment of the sustainability of FCN

Most participants thought that FCN was sustainable, but gave a qualified response to the question. The excellent use of land, the range of amenities within walking distance, the de-emphasis on the use of the car, the parks and Seawall and the general orientation to an active lifestyle were attributes that participants thought contributed to the sustainability of FCN. Many, however, voiced a concern that FCN may be approaching the limits to how many people it can accommodate and that more people will infringe on the qualities that make FCN what it is - a safe and liveable community. Some people also recognized that the sustainability of FCN must be considered within a greater context of the residents' collective impact that extends beyond the geographical boundaries of FCN.⁴⁸

How important is sustainability to residents of FCN?

Approximately half of the participants said that it was very important that both their lifestyle and community be environmentally sustainable. No one said that it was *not* important to them, but three participants did mention that it was neither important nor unimportant. For these participants, environmental sustainability was something that was "nice to have" but did not overly influence how they lived their lives or decided on where to live except in the case where an environmentally friendly choice yields economical benefits. Most of the half who voiced that environmental sustainability was very important to them mentioned that they chose to live in FCN because it would allow them to not have to use their car as much. One participant who had recently moved from San Francisco said enthusiastically "Very important! Vancouver is the leading City in North America; that's why we're here!" Consequently, this was the only participant who said that the provision of "green" features such as recycling and composting facilities, energy efficient appliances, passive design and native species planted in the landscaping would influence the purchase of his home. Two thirds of the other participants agreed that while these features are important, they are not a deciding factor; location, affordability and the unit itself remain higher priorities on nearly everyone's list. However, when participants had to replace appliances, nearly all said that they had opted for more energy efficient appliances and there was a consensus that energy efficient appliances in the unit and heating and cooling systems in the building should be used whenever possible.

⁴⁸ FCN for instance is not sustainable in the respect that it can provide food for its residents was one example that a resident gave.

Resource efficient technologies

Two participants explicitly mentioned efficient technologies in their unit that they had problems with: low flush toilets and heating. Both were very dissatisfied where the former said that the suction on the toilet was so poor that she had to flush twice and the latter said that she was perpetually cold in the winter because the “efficient heating system is pathetic.” Clearly if efficient technologies are to be used, they must be effective to achieve their intended performance and also to show to weary consumers that quality need not be compromised for efficiency.

Recycling facilities

Nearly everyone said that they had recycling collection bins in their building and that they used them regularly. Only one answered that she didn’t use her building’s recycling facilities often because she didn’t have room in her apartment to store the recyclable items. Three participants noted that some people from other cultures didn’t know how to separate their recycling properly and this made it ineffective and caused tension in the building. Nearly everyone mentioned that they already had garborators in their units so a compost was not necessary. Never the less, most answered that they would use a composting facility if one were provided so long as they were told how it worked. A participant from Aquarius 1 mentioned that they were to be a pilot building for a composting service that the City is considering implementing citywide.

Suggestions for improvement

When asked if anything could reasonably be changed about FCN or any additional facilities that could be added to facilitate less environmentally impactful decisions, participants suggested the following:

- Less traffic allowed on Pacific Boulevard;
- Better public transit service (frequency of service, busses that allow carts, strollers and wheelchairs to be wheeled on), including taxis;
- More shops and services that meet people’s basic needs like hardware stores and more food stores offering ranges in prices;
- LEED™ standards for new buildings;
- Installation of effective energy efficient appliances in the units and heating/cooling systems in the building including the use of solar hot water;
- Sensors to control lights within the building so as not to waste electricity;
- A better recycling program that could include glass crushers, electronic recycling depots and composting services;
- Community gardens that are not located in unsafe areas;
- Use of rooftops as areas to garden and grow food;
- A farmer’s market (that perhaps could be located in the notoriously underutilized Roundhouse Plaza);
- Less maintenance to semi-private and park grounds, including using more native species that require less maintenance.

3.9 Decision Making⁴⁹

⁴⁹ 18 participants answered in their questionnaire their reasons for moving to FCN.

Reasons for moving to FCN

By far the biggest reason that people originally moved to False Creek North was to be closer to the downtown core whether that be for work (either theirs or a partner's - which five cited) or simply to be closer to other amenities like shops and services (particularly medical), restaurants, parks and the ocean. The ability to walk to these places was a major draw. Aside from its strategic location, all residents also found the area to be a very "pleasant place" in general.

Being near the water, parks and the seawall in particular was cited by more than half of the respondents as being in the top incentives to moving downtown. Visual access to the parks and water was high on the list. This is a somewhat unique phenomenon in downtown planning, where there is source of recreation amenities in the downtown core that draws people from surrounding neighbourhoods. Two people mentioned that they saw their home as a good investment. A few respondents had the choice to live either in the West End or Coal Harbour and had chosen False Creek North because it's less noisy and transient than the former and a better value for money and had better "domestic infrastructure" than the latter. One elderly woman mentioned that she appreciates "the community environment" of FCN which was a major reason for her being located there. One person in particular said that the trendiness of the area and the "master planned" feel was a draw. Only one person mentioned their unit as being the draw, the selling feature in which was the 500sqft terrace.

Participants were from a range of buildings in FCN:⁵⁰ The 1099, 2 Park West, The Alda, Aquarius 1, Bridgeview Place, Crestmark 1, Icon 1 (2), Marina Side Resort, The Max, Pacific Place 2, Parkview Towers (2), Parkwest 1, Peninsula, the Roundhouse Co-op, Waterworks and West One.

Reasons for moving away from FCN

For those renting, affordability of purchasing was the primary reason that participants anticipated having to leave FCN. For those with young children, the availability of daycare and school spots was a big factor. No one said that they foresaw themselves wanting to leave because they didn't like the area; if anything, there was a great reluctance to move for those who anticipated forces outside their control causing them to leave. Only one woman mentioned that she was planning to move within the next five years because it was getting too populated downtown. The oldest person in our sample - 83 years - wondered if she could continue to live alone in her private unit much longer. Needing assisted care might drive her out of the community. Most people who owned their units were very happy where they were and didn't plan on moving any time soon, if ever, particularly the retired participants.

Overall satisfaction

To conclude the interview, the researchers asked some broad questions to gauge overall satisfaction: Does False Creek North feel like home? Do you like it better here than where you have lived before? If you could purchase (if renting) would you buy, or (if an owner) would you, going back in time, choose to purchase again? Having discussed their units, buildings, parks and neighbourhoods in great detail by this point, almost all of the respondents answered the initial question with an extremely enthusiastic yes - False Creek North is home. "I don't ever want to sell my place", "definitely, this is the best place I've lived so far," "Yes, because I know what to expect I know what's around, I know the type of people that live here. It is just safe for me if that makes sense."

⁵⁰ One respondent did not disclose which building she lives in.

Most said they would purchase again or as renters, said that they would purchase if they could afford it. “Absolutely, whatever they did here, they did right,” exclaimed one resident. Those who are not so certain or are thinking of leaving are doing so because they are not convinced the neighbourhood and their homes will be suitable for their growing family or because they feel that with increasing densification in the neighbourhood and rising property prices, the area is beginning to feel less comfortable. One resident felt that her husband and daughter were quite happy in the area but that she missed nature, was not a city person and would prefer to live elsewhere.

4.0 Summary of Findings

The interviews were an effective way to garner more detail from residents about issues that were addressed from previously implemented methods: the SpeakOut, the World Cafe, the Photo Method with youth and the questionnaire. Conversations with residents allowed us to pursue questions that had emerged from the previous methods and to further triangulate information. We are grateful to all of the residents who so willingly volunteered their time and so openly shared their experiences.

Similar to most residents with whom we have spoken, the interview respondents were all quite satisfied with their living situation and tended to answer questions initially with positive sweeping statements. Specific criticisms and areas for improvement tended to only surface after some probing by interviewers. Most of the information outlined in this section therefore, must be considered in the context of general enthusiasm and appreciation for the successful policy framework that guided the FCN development.

Especially positive comments arose about the park design with large open spaces, the connectivity and water access provided by the Seawall and the convenient access to many amenities and services with little need for driving.

Particularly notable exceptions to positive impressions are the lack of daycare and elementary school spaces, lack of sufficient space and programming for youth and problems experienced by many residents of affordability, not only of their units but also with local facilities and services. All three issues threaten to disproportionately impact families and ultimately erode the neighbourhood's sense of community.

Additional issues raised by many residents, but without the same emotional vigour, include insufficient and inadequately managed visitor parking, insufficient and uncreative use of building and unit space for storage, underused amenities, summer heat, and insufficient unit space. At a broader scale, more park furnishings for leisure activity, more programmed community events and better lighting in some parks and along the Seawall are strongly desired.

Many smaller details with implications for current management of the area or future design of other neighbourhoods also surfaced and some policy modifications will help to make the policy framework used to guide FCN development more applicable to evolving needs, sustainability issues and family needs.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Interview Guide

Appendix B - Consent Form

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter begins by stating the key findings for each of the topic areas and offering a discussion and comparative analysis of other studies where possible and relevant. These key findings were presented in Chapter II: Summary of Key Findings. Given the very specific policies directed towards families with children in the development and the international recognition for bringing families, as well as non-families, into the downtown core, the discussion of specific findings is followed by a more general discussion of how appropriate the policies set out in the FCN ODP and the “High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines” are, how they have been achieved and how they can be improved. The chapter closes with some final concluding words.

6.1 Findings and Discussion for Each Topic Area

Community statistics

- At the time of this study, over 10 570 residents lived in 5 450 households within the boundaries of FCN; 13% of the population was under the age of nineteen.¹
- Census figures show that there is a much higher proportion of children 4 or younger. The ‘spike’ in the population is between 30-39year olds. The demographics of the area have levelled out somewhat since 2001.²
- Fifty percent of residents speak English as a first language; the other fifty percent come from a range of backgrounds and cultures and speak many languages including: Chinese, Spanish, Persian and Serbian.³
- Nearly forty percent of the households are renting.⁴
- Home owners tended to occupy larger units.
- Questionnaire respondents were broadly representative of FCN residents, however it appears that fewer lower income and English as a second language residents responded than would be representative of the community’s composition. The age distribution of respondents and the size of units, however, reflect the FCN demographic profile from the 2006 Vancouver census data.⁵

¹ Statistics Canada, 2007

² Brownell, 2006, found in her study that most people thought that downtown was good for raising children under the age of 6, more challenging for 6-11 and relatively good for 12+, which is congruent with this trend.

³ Statistics Canada, 2007

⁴ Statistics Canada, 2007

⁵ Statistics Canada, 2007

General satisfaction findings

- **Respondents with whom we *spoke* at the SpeakOut, the World Cafe, the interview or the children from the Week with a Camera exercise were all quite satisfied with their living situation and 96% of questionnaire respondents claimed that they would recommend living in FCN.** Respondents state that FCN felt like “home” and tended to answer questions initially with positive sweeping statements. Specific criticisms and area for improvement tended to only surface after some probing by researchers. Many, though not all, issues are related to management shortcomings rather than initial structural faults. Most of the findings therefore must be considered in the context of general enthusiasm and appreciation for the successful policy framework that guided the FCN development. This finding of high over all satisfaction is consistent with a 2006 study on the family-friendliness of Vancouver’s Downtown podium neighbourhoods in which Brownell found that study respondents (most of which were families) were quite satisfied with the amenities and design of their neighbourhoods.⁶
- **A wide range of factors influenced residents’ decisions to move to False Creek North most notably being proximity to work, public and private amenities and “livable” urban lifestyle.** The ability to walk to public and private amenities (restaurants, theatre, parks, shopping, etc.) were listed often as contributing factors and are consistent with the 2006 study by Brownell.⁷ The desire to live near the water was also voiced by a number of residents as contributing to their decision to locate in FCN. Families stated having more time with family due to a reduced commute.
- **In comparison to other high density downtown communities in Vancouver, FCN is viewed by its residents as having “suburban”-like qualities not typically found in the inner city:** generous park space, clean air, an active lifestyle, a slower pace, schools and lots of children. Subsidized housing and the cooperative in particular are known for their strong family orientation which is a source of community and satisfaction.
- **FCN caters well to the needs and preferences of children; the children in the study were very positive towards social interaction, learning and satisfaction with the public spaces and built environment.** They enjoy having a mix of uses in their neighbourhood so they do not need to go outside of the neighbourhood; they like places where they can play freely, play sports, shop, hang out with friends and entertain themselves. However, Brownell found that the ability of the downtown neighbourhoods to meet the motor development needs of school-aged children was raised by child development specialists. Potential responses include: piloting traffic controlled Woonerfs in the downtown neighbourhoods, adventure playgrounds and install weather protection on children’s play equipment.⁸

⁶ Brownell, 2006. Note, the downtown neighbourhoods in the Brownell study included: Coal Harbour, Downtown South, False Creek North and International Village.

⁷ Brownell, 2006.

⁸ Brownell, 2006 noted that research at the UBC Human Early Learning Partnership had found that children living downtown and entering kindergarten were classified on the study’s motor development readiness scale as “vulnerable”, or at risk. The possible reasons for this included less space to run around freely, fewer organized sports in the area and a lack of space to play autonomously and creatively with their environment by digging, constructing and reconstructing. It was noted that specifically lacking are exploratory landscaped areas (such as bamboo or other types of plantings) where children could play more inventively, as well as sufficient covered areas. In sum, it would appear that more creative approaches are needed to provide longer term and richer play value for children living in FCN and other downtown neighbourhoods.

- **Renters and owner-occupiers alike say they feel a connection to and an “ownership” of the community.** Residents in social and cooperative housing do not feel that their buildings do not stand out as being different from the market buildings. This is contrary to an international study that found that tenant satisfaction is almost universally lower than homeowner satisfaction, possibly because of the potential for conflicts with management among other reasons. This result was present even after controlling for housing quality, in Ireland, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Denmark, Greece, Italy and Spain.⁹
- **While the daycare and school facilities are commended as being excellent, if one can get in, the lack of enough of these facilities is an ongoing frustration, concern and challenge to raising a family in FCN.**¹⁰ As the downtown residential community continues to grow and if families do remain downtown as their children age in place, there will be a need for more schools, including high schools, especially in the eastern side of the downtown peninsula.¹¹
- **Lack of sufficient space and programming for youth and problems experienced by many residents of affordability, not only of their units but also with local facilities and services also present challenges to residents;** these issues threaten disproportionately impact families and those of lower incomes and ultimately erode the neighbourhood’s sense of community.
- **One-third have been at the same address for one to three years and slightly fewer for more than five years. About 20 percent have lived at their current dwelling for 3-5 years, while 17 percent indicated that they moved less than one year ago.**
- **About one-third of residents planned to stay in the area for 5 years;** those who were 39 and younger were the most likely to move within 5 years. Families with children under the age of 12 were much more likely to move earlier than those without children; fewer than 27 percent of families with children intend to stay at their current address for more than 5 years, compared for 48 percent of those without young children. The overwhelming reason was the need for more space/lack of affordability of FCN.¹²
- **Tenure and location within the community were correlated with likelihood of moving; safety was not.** Those who reported living in the Roundhouse and Beach neighbourhoods were the most likely to live in the current dwelling for more than five years. Those who said they lived in the Yaletown Edge neighbourhood were the least likely to do so. Owners were also more likely to stay in their unit for more than three years, while renters were much more likely to move within that time period. Perceptions of safety, both in the FCN community and

⁹ Elsinga & Hoekstra, 2005.

¹⁰ McCrea et al. 2005 found that access to facilities is a predictor of neighbourhood satisfaction for parents.

¹¹ Elsie Roy Elementary School has operated at capacity since it opened in 2004 and is now over capacity. The waiting list for childcare centres in the area is now close to 1800, or one and a half to two years long (City of Vancouver, 2007). Brownell, 2006 found in her study that in 2005 all the downtown schools were operating above capacity, with wait lists, and that the projected rates of enrolment indicated that the severity of the situation was only likely to intensify.

¹² This is consistent with Brownell, 2006, in which she notes: “As a general observation, any time that residents spoke to the idea of one day choosing to leave the downtown, their comments were vary rarely in the context of dissatisfaction with any particular neighbourhood issues. Rather, such comments were almost always made in reference to their family’s increasing need for living space and whether they would be able to afford this need downtown.”

in the public spaces at night time did not appear to play a significant role in determining whether or not one was intending to move in the next three years.

Sense of community findings

- **How respondents rated FCN’s “sense of community” depends on personality and definition of the term.** Sense of community was rated highly for those who equate accessibility, density and familiarity with sense of community. Some residents say they feel a strong community attachment to their neighbours, while others feel that the community has room to grow in this respect, perhaps because it is a relatively new community. These residents explain that while they may recognise faces, relationships remain very superficial and it is difficult to make friends with neighbours. Many residents suggest that parents and adults of different cultural backgrounds mix far less than do the children.
- **Community is evident in older buildings and co-operatives primarily.** Community appears to be stronger for residents who have lived in the area since its inception, about a decade ago. Some longer-term residents feel that the sense of neighbourliness that they once felt strongly is declining as units become more expensive and as the diversity of the area, in their mind, decreases. They describe a faster pace caused by growing density and increased pretence and snobiness with decreasing affordability.¹³
- **Dog-owners, strata councils and/or parents with young children are clusters within the community that reported a higher sense of community than those who were not part of these clusters.**
- **Some residents would like to see more programmed community events and more public areas for community congregation and lingering; this is desired both at the community and building scale.** A number of seniors mentioned the desire to interact with their neighbours.¹⁴

Parks and public open spaces findings

- **Most residents are overwhelmingly satisfied with local parks.** Appreciated for their size, quantity and wide-open spaces, the parks are well used and are considered one of the neighbourhood’s strongest attributes. The Seawall and open parks are reasons cited for choosing FCN over other neighbourhoods, such as Coal Harbour or Yaletown. Residents compliment the overall aesthetic of the neighbourhood parks focusing particular praise on the quality landscaping and the design of the parks. Many residents note that the large size of the parks allows for flexibility and diversity of activities.¹⁵

¹³ Brownell, 2006 also noted that a sense of ‘snootiness’ was reported in some of the downtown neighbourhoods.

¹⁴ McCrea et al. 2005 found that neighbourhood satisfaction amongst older people is best predicted by neighbourhood interaction. Brownell, 2006 also found that public congregation spaces provide valuable social learning opportunities for children and youth. She noted Urban Fare and the Roundhouse Community Centre as being particularly successful in this regard.

¹⁵ Brownell, 2006 also found that the Seawall, the connectivity to the water and the park design with large open spaces were unanimously appreciated features by families living in the downtown core.

- **Parks, plazas and open space were frequented regularly by residents, particularly by families and those who are within “viewing” distance of the parks.**¹⁶ Those living in two and three bedroom units were more likely to visit the parks every day, while those living in one bedroom units were more likely to visit the park once a week or less often. There was no correlation between tenure and frequency of park visits, nor income and frequency of park visits. This suggests that renters and owners, as well those in different income categories, are using the public space in relatively the same frequency. There appears to be no relationship between gender and amount of use of public space in FCN which is contrary to other studies.¹⁷
- **Families and those who earned less were less likely to report that parks and outdoor space fulfilled most of their needs.** The amount of play space, as well as the access to that play space received higher satisfaction levels than the variety and safety of the play space. There was no relationship found between age and public space meeting residents’ needs. There was also no relationship between the type of unit a respondent lived in and satisfaction with public spaces. Intuitively, one might think that those living in smaller units would need to ‘escape’ from their smaller units more often than those who live in larger, more spacious units, but this does not seem to be the case in FCN.
- **When asked what residents would like to see changed in the public open spaces, “no changes” was the more frequent response, followed by more relaxation amenities** such as chairs, picnic tables and benches. Parents and children would also like to see more varied, creative and “adventurous” play spaces for children, particularly older children. More spaces for dogs was also vocalized. Residents also believe that the smaller parks should be better integrated into the neighbourhood to break-up the built form and to better connect the open spaces.
- **The presence of dogs in public parks is a polarizing and emotional topic.** Insufficient off-leash dog space, uncollected dog faeces and no enforcement around either of these policies were causes for frustration.
- **Overall, residents value the public art because of its symbolic value and ability to instil community.** However, some specific pieces are critiqued for being too cold and metallic.

Movement and transportation findings

- **Residents, including children, praise the walkability of the community which is possible because of the range of community amenities and commercial services near by.** Walking is the primary means by which children get around in the neighbourhood.

¹⁶ Dornbusch & Gelb, 1977 found that people who can see a park or plaza from home or work tend to visit it comparatively frequently.

¹⁷ Although we know that in general males tend to use parks more than women, particularly for sports (Krenichyn, 2003) FCN appears to offer a variety of public spaces, notably the Seawall, which appear to be relatively gender-neutral. Some academics argue that the ways women are expected to act, as well as concerns over safety can make the simple enjoyment of public space more difficult for women than men (Bondi, 1998). The findings from the questionnaire indicate that this may not be the case in FCN.

- **Nearly two-thirds (61%) of respondents reported walking more than 10 minutes to meet day-to-day needs.**
- **Despite appreciating the community’s walkability, residents did not give up owning their cars.** Ninety percent of households own at least one vehicle. Of those in the 25-39 category, 92 percent owned one or two cars, which was much higher than any other age group. Transit costs and distance to certain retailers, especially mid-sized grocery stores, inability to commute quickly to work using transit and difficulty of connecting with the rest of the Metropolitan region via transit are barriers that prevent residents from reducing their automobile dependence.
- **Roughly two-thirds (65%) of households owned a bike, most of which (78%) stored them in a common bicycle storage room provided in the building.** Eleven percent reported their bikes were stored mostly in their unit, while nearly no one (0.3%) indicated they stored their bicycle on the street.
- **For those adults who worked outside of the unit, the most common regular mode of travel to work was the automobile.** A total of 46 percent indicated that the car was their primary mode, 30 percent indicated walking, 8 percent reported transit and only 1.5 percent said that cycling was the main way they travelled to work, despite the fact that 65% of respondents reported owning at least one bike.¹⁸

Shops, services and facilities findings

- **The shops, services and facilities in FCN meet the needs of some respondents, but not a majority.** Just over half of respondents reported walking beyond their neighbourhood to meet day-to-day needs. Reasons for doing so varied from affordability, to availability, to personal preference. Walking beyond the FCN community to meet day-to-day needs was not found to be related to having children under the age of 12, the neighbourhood in which a resident reported they lived, the number of vehicles owned by the respondent’s household, or gender. It was also not related to tenure or income; owners (and high-income earners) were just as likely to shop outside of the community as were renters (and low-income earners).
- **The primary outstanding needs are for a greater diversity of shops and services that are affordable and reflect the range of incomes in the neighbourhood.** The greatest retail need identified in the community is a mid-sized grocery store. Other retail gaps frequently cited include a bakery, a hardware store, clothing shops, a dollar store and family and child-oriented stores and restaurants.¹⁹ More entertainment for adults is also desired, such as closer and more diverse theatres and lectures with forums for discussion in the Roundhouse. Another

¹⁸ Twelve percent of questionnaire indicated that they worked from inside their unit, 62 percent worked from outside the unit and 27 percent reported that they did not work. There were, however, concerns from the researchers, data enterer, and data analyzer that this question was not interpreted as it was intended. A comparatively high number of respondents did not follow directions on this question correctly, wrote comments when none were asked for, or simply skipped this question entirely. As a result, any findings or correlations with this variable may not be accurate.

¹⁹ Brownell, 2006 also found that Urban Fare was criticized for not being affordable for a typical family and that FCN and the surrounding downtown environs were seen as lacking a sufficient number of family-oriented restaurants, both from an affordability and atmosphere perspective. The participants in her study also noted a lack of sufficient corner stores for quick purchases.

study found that aside from zoning and regulatory tools, one way the City might be most influential in encouraging family friendly local commercial is through the provision of information to the private commercial sector. City might also consider facilitating surveys and/or other communications with the private sector to help identify any barriers which they perceive to locating in the new neighbourhoods of the downtown.²⁰

- **The Roundhouse Community Centre is a well-loved community hub of FCN that provides valuable services to the community, although there are too few activities catering to some age ranges at the Roundhouse, especially seniors and youth.**²¹ The Roundhouse Community Centre is potentially the most important element in the neighbourhood for the children in our study; it operates as a node and landmark where children meet and interact.
- **A relatively low percentage of families reported that access to public amenities (16%) and local facilities and services (15%) presented a challenge to raising a family in FCN. However, “School/daycare” was perceived as a challenge by more than half (53%) of respondents with children, and received a number of negative comments.**
- **Some residents noted that nearby nightclubs in Yaletown are considered noisy, disruptive and not appropriate for a residential neighbourhood.**

Safety findings

- **Concerns about community safety were not reported to be a major problem in FCN. Respondents generally felt very safe in both indoor and outdoor space in FCN, and only slightly less safe at nighttime.** Women felt no less safe than men,²² nor did perceptions of safety vary by age although wealthier residents felt greater safety than lower income residents. Families generally did not indicate that safety was a challenge.²³ These results, however, should be interpreted with some caution, as the questions in the formal self-complete questionnaire asked only about perceptions of safety and not about behaviour people might engage into avoid unsafe areas and/or situations.

²⁰ Brownell, 2006.

²¹ Brownell, 2006 noted that the downtown community centres at the time of her study could not keep up with demand, yet more openness and informality was noted as needed community indoor and outdoor spaces so as to provide children and youth with an environment to create their own fun. Spaces and activities for youth 10-15 was seen as sorely lacking. Both of these findings are consistent with those from this study. Brownell, 2006 also notes that there is a particular need for teen centres in high density contexts compared to the suburbs as most suburban teens live in much larger homes where they either have their own (larger) private bedroom, or there are extra rooms in the house which become their default space.

²² Although many studies (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 2005, Parts I and II; Kitchen & Schneider, 2002, p241, 251) have indicated that females have greater safety fears than males this doesn't seem to be the case in FCN.

²³ This is consistent with what Brownell, 2006 found where the two families from FCN in her study interviewed felt that FCN was as safe or safer than suburbs due to the numbers of people (described as high density, but not overwhelming).

- **Specific locations were noted as feeling somewhat unsafe** such as: Coopers park under the Cambie Street Bridge,²⁴ under the Granville Street Bridge, near the Concord Pacific construction site on the east end of FCN, the alleyways behind Pacific Boulevard that back onto pubs and nightclubs and the U-shaped seating area in the northwest corner of David Lam Park. These areas are perceived as unsafe because they are darker, less manicured and/or less frequented by people.
- **Social activities and neighbourliness confer the benefits of “eyes on the street” which is well recognized by the residents as being the foundation of the community’s security.**²⁵
- **There were a number of comments regarding the perceived threats posed from homeless people and drug users, lighting in parks and along the seawall at nighttime, dogs and traffic along Pacific Boulevard.**
- **A statistically significant correlation exists between income and perceptions of safety in the respondents’ buildings.** Although there may be a variety of reasons why this is the case, higher income earners are probably more likely to live in buildings with greater security measures, such as a concierge, security patrols, alarm systems and secure entry measures such as key FOBS.²⁶
- **Although FOBs are greatly appreciated for the security that they afford, most residents are acutely aware of the trade-offs to “sense of community” within their building.** They note that the system restricts floor-to-floor access, thereby inhibiting neighbourliness within buildings. Residents would like to see initiatives that counteract this negative impact of the FOB system.
- **Pacific Boulevard is perceived by many as being unsafe, noisy, unattractive and a source of pollution.**²⁷

²⁴ Interestingly, in the study by Brownell, 2006 City of Vancouver planning staff believed Coopers park below Cambie bridge to be particularly *good* and *safe* park because of their distance from car traffic and the higher risk activities perceived to be more prevalent in the inner core of downtown Vancouver.

²⁵ MacDonald, 2005 also found in a study on resident’s perceptions of Vancouver’s street-facing townhouse units that ground floor direct entry units (usually townhouses) provide a sense of eyes on the street. This is consistent with what Brownell, 2006 found where Vancouver planning staff felt that the design controls on the high density development, typically setting the rowhouses back 12 feet from the sidewalk, or 18 feet from the curb, had created a successful street wall with a secure sense of eyes on the street.

²⁶ Such security devices have been found in past studies to deter crime and promote a greater of security among residents of the particular building (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 2005, Parts I and II; Kitchen & Schneider, 2002).

²⁷ Although the responses from our study did not reveal a very strong opinion from many residents about Pacific Boulevard (although those who did mention it, were highly negative about it for the above stated reasons), the study by Brownell, 2006 revealed that the perception of the boulevard as being unsafe was a major concern of the families in her sample; the crossing distances, traffic volumes and speeds were consistently highlighted as major safety concerns. Her study also noted that FCN fared favourably in the comments about the neighbourhood’s overall street network.

Satisfaction with the residential building

- **Building amenities, design of the building itself, building grounds, maintenance and friendliness of building management are important to many residents, many of whom rate these highly.**
- **The main areas that could benefit from more attention in building design and management are visitor parking, number of elevators, insufficient and uncreative use of building space for storage space and generally underused indoor and outdoor amenities.**
- **Families rated their overall satisfaction with their building lower than residents without children.** Other studies have shown that high-rise residential buildings work better for those without children than for those who do have young children.²⁸ In particular, the amount, variety and safety of play space at the building scale are viewed as needing improvement.
- **Amenities were given the highest satisfaction rating in comparison to other building attributes.** There was, however, a relationship between income and satisfaction with building amenities. Those earning less than \$20,000 indicated the highest level of dissatisfaction with building amenities (40 percent), which may be because many of those in this income bracket live in buildings lacking the amenities offered in some of the more expensive residential complexes and buildings. There was no relationship between gender and building amenity satisfaction, or between age and amenity satisfaction. This is consistent with experts' opinions that amenities provided in FCN buildings serve the needs of males and females, as well as those of varying ages of adulthood.²⁹
- **Residents need semi-private spaces, interior and exterior, with which they can interact—rooms that can be used for a variety of purposes, and outside areas that can be used for impromptu recreation, picnicking, gardening, and other activities, much like a backyard would be used.** Residents would like more programming of the outdoor spaces or at least permission for active uses (such as badminton, kickball and gardening) and a flexibility of uses. They would like to see more outdoor furniture such as benches, weather protection, barbeques and interesting children's play equipment that is tailored to children of a wide age range. Such spaces should be designed with adequate sun exposure.
- **Many residents would like to see more efforts in their building to bring people together,** citing particular initiatives in some buildings that have been successful: squash tournaments, movie nights, children's games or hockey nights. Many explained that common indoor and outdoor spaces in buildings would be more frequently used if certain rules were relaxed, such as limits to guests, complicated booking arrangements, costly deposits, alcohol bans and activity restrictions. Some also noted that from a design perspective, buildings could be designed more effectively to foster spontaneous activity and chance social encounters. Open common spaces, in addition to privately reserved ones, could allow residents to meet one another informally through chance encounters.
- **Residents report general satisfaction with resident parking in the market-rate buildings.** There is some indication that residents who do not own a car retain their parking stall for its resale value, for guest use or for parking their rental or cooperative car.

²⁸ Sarkissian and Kerr, 2003

²⁹ Sarkissian, W. Interview conducted on March 2, 2008.

- **The provision and management of visitor parking is a major point of contention for many residents.** Many participants find the pass system to be a major hassle, especially because they cannot even guarantee that there will be an available spot for the visitor when they enter the parkade. The number of stalls for visitors is generally described as “grossly inadequate,” a problem exacerbated because at any time there are generally many unoccupied stalls within the parkade. Visitor parking is particularly an issue at “peak periods” such as weekend evenings or when events are going on elsewhere in Downtown Vancouver.
- **Residents in multi-family housing appreciate storage.** There is strong evidence that indicates that this is a major source of satisfaction for those who have it and, more commonly, dissatisfaction for those who do not. This problem is exacerbated for some by the fact that there is other unused space within the building, usually in the parkade. Although residents would not necessarily like to use parking stalls for storage even if they were permitted – because it could be unsightly, a fire hazard and attract thieves – using underutilized spaces more creatively and efficiently to meet resident storage needs would add to the satisfaction of living in multi-family residential buildings.
- **Residents in more than twenty-story towers with only two elevators are generally very dissatisfied with their provisions,** especially when one elevator breaks down or is being used for moving, which occurs regularly in large buildings with high renter turnover.

Satisfaction with the individual unit

- **Unit satisfaction levels varied widely, but respondents were generally satisfied with their overall unit.** Comments suggest that, while certain elements could benefit from improvement, general functionality is not impaired by the unit design. There was no statistically significant relationship between overall layout satisfaction and age, gender, income or length of residency.
- **Elements of the unit that could be improved include: insufficient general in-suite storage space, insufficient specific storage spaces such as kitchen cabinets and drawers, linen closets and bedroom closets, insufficient and/or inflexible unit space, balcony/outdoor space, kitchens and additional bedrooms.**³⁰
- **Families with children are equally satisfied with the overall layout of their suite, but express dissatisfaction with the size of their unit and particular rooms, such as kitchens (as compared to those without children).** In all, 68% of families indicated that adequate space in the dwelling unit presented a challenge to raising a family in FCN. Those families who had occupied their dwelling for the shortest amount of time (fewer than 12 months) were the least likely to indicate that adequate space was a challenge (38% indicated this), while those who had lived for between 1-5 years were the most likely to indicate that space presented a challenge (81% indicated this).
- **Children that commented on their unit were positive and liked the views from or location**

³⁰This is not inconsistent with a satisfaction on renters in multifamily dwellings that found that the number of bathrooms, the number of other (non bedrooms) rooms, and the total unit floor area all show a positive relationship with resident satisfaction (James, 2007).

of their home. They enjoy living near their friends.

- **A preference for an open-plan, as opposed to a separated kitchen appears to be a matter of personal taste** and is perhaps also related to generational and cultural preference. These findings suggest that it may be advantageous for developers to leave the design of the kitchen layout as flexible as possible as an option for purchasers.
- **Enclosed balconies were reported as being used for a range of purposes, primarily typical balcony uses** (such as plants or casual seating) (47%), as a den or office (31%), or as an eating area (6%). Others feel that it is a waste of space because its function is unclear: a compromise of both indoor and outdoor space.
- **Open balconies are appreciated but enclosed balconies receive mixed views** which were sometimes perceived as wasted space that could be better used elsewhere. At the very least, these respondents feel that residents should have the option of renovating the space to make it more functional.³¹
- **A majority of residents use their in-suite space primarily for storage** (67%), 9% used this space for a den or office, and 6% used it for a pantry. Most residents who have in-suite storage consider it a major strength of their unit and use it for storage rather than converting it to other uses. Many point out a lack of specific storage spaces such as kitchen drawers and cabinets, linen closets and main bedroom closets. Many respondents indicate that their long narrow walk-in closets are so poorly designed that they cannot get into the closet to retrieve their items.
- **Second bedroom usage indicated a possible under-utilization of maximum occupancy within units.**
- **Noise from within the unit or within building was largely not a problem although noise, particularly traffic noise, from outside was an issue.**
- **Few residents report visual privacy as an issue** and many comment good-naturedly on the “mutual understanding” that everyone living in a high-rise building has with regard to looking into each others’ windows.³² Large windows are generally appreciated because they add much needed light. Some think, however, that full windows in bedrooms are not appropriate for privacy reasons.
- **Heat from the sun can be unbearable in some of the units**, particularly for those in the higher floors and south-facing units. Air conditioning or better cross-ventilation are identified by many as ways to improve thermal comfort.

³¹ Another study found that the outdoor porch/balcony is particularly important in providing additional, private and flexible space in a multifamily housing setting where unit floor spaces is relatively limited, and thus positively impacts resident satisfaction. “Such space allows the resident to separate from the normal living environment without leaving the residence (James, 2007).

³² This is inconsistent with Day, 2000, where she found that privacy was major issue for people living in relatively low density of 12.5 units per acre. Either participants in our study have become accustomed to the lack of privacy or the buildings have intentionally or unintentionally successfully mitigated the lack of privacy associated with density; likely both are true.

- **In general, having a unit that lends itself well to renovations is a source of satisfaction for homeowners.** This is consistent with a number of studies that uncovered that spatial adaptability was a key element in the impact of unit design on resident satisfaction and that the degree of control occupants have over the use of space can ameliorate some negative effects of density.³³

Perceptions of the community's sustainability³⁴

- **Sustainability was considered as being important or very important to half of the interview participants.**
- **Most of the children in the study have an awareness of the natural environment and raised concerns on the water pollution and litter in the neighbourhood.** They appreciate transit and recycling programs offered in the neighbourhood.
- **Most participants support increased energy efficiency of appliances and building systems.**
- **Many residents don't want to use energy intensive air conditioning to cool their units.** Several residents believe that more could have been done to mitigate temperature variability when the units were constructed, rather than installing air conditioning.
- **Some energy efficient systems are not effective such as energy efficient heating systems and water saving toilets.**
- **Most residents recycle, although it has been noted that there is some tension in this regard with those in the building who do not understand how to separate materials.** Some suggested providing information and/or training to incoming residents, particularly those from other cultures that may have different methods.
- **A mix of stores that better reflects the range of incomes and needs in the community would add to the social and economic sustainability of FCN.**
- **Many residents are also concerned that FCN may be approaching the limits to how many people it can accommodate and that more people will infringe on the qualities that make FCN what it is – a safe and liveable community.**

³³ Day, 2000; Altas & Özsoy, 1998; Edwards et al., 1994.

³⁴ The following findings are from the interview method, as sustainability was not discussed explicitly in the other methods, unless otherwise stated.

6.2 Evaluation of Select Overarching Research Questions and FCN Policies

6.2.1 Questions pertaining to the planning of the project

In Chapter III a number of areas for improvement in the planning stages were identified in hindsight by City planning staff. A brief discussion ensues as to whether residents also perceive these as meriting attention.

In-depth sustainability analyses and projected social responses to the development, now considered best practice, should have been conducted.

With half of interview respondents stating that sustainability - ecological, social and economic -, is important or very important to them, many individuals at the SpeakOut community event and children in the Week With a Camera Exercise raising the issue of environmentally sustainability unprompted, it would appear that residents support efforts made at the planning, but also management stage, to lower the ecological impact of their neighbourhood. Many residents also explicitly mentioned valuing social mix in the neighbourhood and would like to see more, but believe that adequate, affordable services be in place as well as schools and daycare for families. Clearly also, sustainability analyses are increasingly becoming incorporated as best practice in land use development, as is exemplified with the City's creation of the Southeast False Creek 'sustainable' community.

More institutions such as adequate schools, daycare and churches are needed.

The lack of churches does not appear to be a major concern to the residents of FCN, although a desire for more community areas to congregate (a function that churches provide) was voiced by many residents. The lack of schools and daycare facilities, on the other hand are a major impediment to raising a family in FCN and families are frustrated with the situation. It is clear that more are needed and the City should act on this immediately and ensure that future developments have adequate provisions at the appropriate time in the development (i.e. not many years after families have moved in).

More emphasis on preserving the rich history of the site through local heritage features could add value to the community.

Perhaps somewhat oddly enough, the history of the site was not a major discussion point amongst participants despite the site's rich and changing heritage. This could be because the neighbourhood already incorporates heritage features through its park and plaza design and because the community hub of the neighbourhood is a heritage feature. Or it could be because respondents have a number of other issues that are of greater concern to them. One thing that can be said about the art features in FCN, many of which have aim to highlight the local heritage, is that respondents appreciate the fact that their community has public art, even if it's not to everyone's taste.

The legacies of inadequate quality of construction of some of the units and associated problems associated with the 'leaky condo' era remain of concern and dissatisfaction to some residents, property owners and building managers.

This is clearly true and a source of dissatisfaction for those who are continuing to live with and mitigate the issue. A number of residents admitted that they had been dealing with their own leaky condo for years and had spent tens of thousands of dollars. This was noted as being a constant background stress to the respondents' living situation. One child even mentioned that his building is

a ‘disaster’ because of the leaks; obviously the poor construction standards are affecting the way other members of the family beyond the parents perceive their home. What was interesting, however, is that the respondents we spoke with were not necessarily angry about the situation; perhaps because they had been dealing with the problem for so long that they were now resigned to it. While there is no simple solution to this problem, these residents who continue to live with this problem of substandard quality should not be forgotten and should be helped wherever possible and appropriate.

There are aesthetic challenges to developing such a large development over a short period of time and the built form has been critiqued for its ‘one-generation aesthetic’ and the abundance of too much green glass.

Respondents feel the same way. Preference for architectural style is clearly a matter of taste, however, many residents responded to their building’s aesthetics with cool satisfaction rather than enthusiasm and the majority were rather critical. Taken as a whole, the collection of buildings in FCN is viewed by many to be too monotonous, grey and green. The abundance of green glass has the added effect of creating a literal green house effect in many of the units which causes thermal discomfort particularly during the summer months. Numerous respondents argued that just because Vancouver receives a lot of rain and is grey much of the year does not mean that thermal comfort for those days when it is sunny should not be ignored.

6.2.2 Questions pertaining to the lived experiences of FCN residents

In Chapter III a number of questions were raised from the development community, the City and interested researchers on the lived experiences of residents. A brief discussion of residents’ experiences in each of these areas ensues.

Have the development pressures in neighbourhoods surrounding FCN, particularly in Yaletown, led to the creation of an affluent neighbourhood which may not be meeting the needs of those of moderate income and in social housing?

The fact that affordability both of units and of shops and services was raised by such a large proportion of the respondents, both of higher income and not, indicates that the needs of many residents of moderate income and in social housing are not being met within the community. These people report having to shop elsewhere, taking transit or their car to do so. For these people, the unanimously lauded ‘walkable’ characteristic of the neighbourhood is more of a recreational nature rather than of facilitating the acquisition of day-to-day provisions.

Are units meeting the needs of the range of people living in FCN?

For those homeowners who renovated their units, satisfaction with the unit was higher than for those who could not or had not renovated and one reason cited was because the renovations allowed them to meet their changing needs. Families and residents without children, although particularly families, stated that lack of unit space raised a challenge to their household. Interestingly enough, however, most residents recognized that in moving downtown a smaller living space was inevitable but desired more flexibility and adaptability in their unit design to meet their needs.

Could units be improved to accommodate flexibility and adaptability of use?

While few residents gave specific examples of what in their unit could be improved to accommodate flexibility and adaptability of use, it was clear that many residents would appreciate this approach to housing when living in multi-family dwellings. Two interview respondents suggested that we look to Japan and Germany for examples of innovations in unit flexibility and adaptability. While most residents suggested that they would like a flexible and adaptable unit to accommodate more space and activities for their current household composition, it is also plausible that flexibility and adaptability in unit design could allow for households to more effectively age in place as needs change over time. A flexible, adaptable unit may also be more attractive to prospective buyers who are unsure of downsizing from a single-family home. Some respondents also noted that they would like to see more flexibility and adaptability at the building scale so as to make better use of unused space such as empty parking garages and underutilized amenities rooms.

To what extent do the dense built form and the marketing of a leisure and resort-type aesthetic influence community interaction and social capital?

This question can only be discussed through a comparison of other neighbourhoods who may have a less 'leisure and resort-type feel'. As noted above, how residents rate the sense of community in FCN depends on their definition of the term. For those who seek some familiarity and cordiality in their day to day interactions, FCN seems to rate highly. For those seeking deeper friendships, FCN does not seem to be as high in this respect with most respondents admitting that they don't know the names of many other people in their neighbourhood or even in the building or on their floor. Clusters of community do emerge, however, around dogs-owners, parents, strata council members and children. Some longer-term residents feel that a sense of neighbourliness that they once felt strongly is declining as units become more expensive and as the diversity of the area, in their mind, decreases. They describe a faster pace caused by growing density and increased pretence and snobiness with decreasing affordability.

To what extent do the mix of land uses, which provide for a focus of activity and vibrancy in the neighbourhood, detract from the tranquility and residential feel that residents seek?

Although many residents stated that noise from outside their unit was an annoyance, it was primarily traffic noise, and in particular traffic from Pacific Boulevard which is one of the few areas in downtown Vancouver where vehicles can gain some speed, and do. There was little explicit about the mix of uses that appeared to detract from the residential feel that residents seek, other than the bars and clubs near the Yaletown border. Interestingly enough those who lived nearer to this border were more likely to report moving in the next three years than those who lived in the more 'suburban' parts of FCN near the water. We did not follow up on this to determine if it is in fact the mix of uses and noise that were motivations for this statistic. It would appear, on the whole, that FCN is able to provide a residential and 'suburban' feel that meets the needs for tranquility by most of its residents.

To what extent do residents feel that high-rise living is appropriate for raising families over time?

What's interesting about this perspective is that many respondents with children seemed to have no qualms of raising a family in a high-rise context; they seemed to feel that it was appropriate. There are, however, certain challenges to doing so, some of which may cause them to leave the

neighbourhood, such as lack of daycare and school spaces, lack of sufficient activities and space (both private and public) for older children, increased affordability.

6.2.3 Evaluation of the City’s “High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines”

Chapter III discussed the policies and guidelines that shaped FCN. One of the most notable and detailed with respect to providing for family needs in a high-density setting is “High Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines.” a number of questions were raised from the development community, the City and interested researchers on the lived experiences of residents. A brief discussion of families’ experiences and perspectives with respect to each of these guidelines follows. The objective for each guideline and criteria and discussion around the objective are outlined below where relevant; a comment from the Project Team based on the FCN POE findings is stated below each guideline description.

The “City’s High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines” (updated March 1992) included three sets of guidelines - one for project planning, one for project design and one for unit design.

Project Planning

1. Site Selection

- a. Objective: “Families with children should have reasonable and effective access to essential community services and recreational amenities.”
- b. Criteria: “Site selected for family housing development should be within 0.8 km walking distance of an elementary school and its outdoor play area, a daycare centre, and after school facility, a community centre, and grocery shopping and within 0.4 km walking distance to a playground and a public transit stop. Effective access means a walking route which is both safe (free from barriers such as the need to cross a major, unsignalled traffic arterial) and secure (having an environment suitable for elementary school children).”
- c. Discussion: “Consideration should be given to ensuring that key services and amenities have sufficient capacity to serve the anticipated population of the new development. If a new housing development would overload the existing neighbourhood facilities and services, consideration must be given as to how the additional demand could be accommodated.”
- d. **Comment:** Families strongly support this guideline and its objective. Many of the components of it, however, are not being currently met within FCN. The daycare and school are full, the grocery store is expensive, there are not enough activities for older children throughout the development, including at the Roundhouse. Consider must be given as to how the additional demand will be accommodated, especially seeing that the community has not stopped growing in number.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

- a. Objective: “Housing for families with children should be protected from conflicts with adjacent land uses.”
- b. Criteria: “Care should be taken when family housing is developed on sites adjacent to non-residential land uses to provide for physical separation and security and for visual and acoustic privacy. Mixing of non-residential uses on the same site as family housing

requires clear separation of pedestrian and vehicular access, distinct and separate parking areas, and secure, semi-private open space for the family project.”

c. **Comment:** Families appear to be quite satisfied in this regard.

3. Neighbourhood Compatibility

a. Objective: “To encourage new high-density family developments to fit into their surrounding neighbourhoods.”

b. Criteria: “Family housing developments should be compatible in scale, character, and materials to their surrounding neighbourhood. In new development areas with a wide range of social and economic mix, the scale of buildings and quality of design should be comparable for all projects. The use of high quality, durable materials is critical in family projects due to the intensive use which children make of their immediate environment.”

c. Discussion: “Where social and economic mix varies from building to building within a development area, research indicates that satisfaction is enhanced when the scale and quality of development is consistent throughout.”

d. **Comment:** Respondents in FCN noted that it is virtually impossible to distinguish among different tenure types in buildings; non-market buildings blend almost seamlessly with those around the. Residents of social and cooperative housing do not feel that their homes stand out as being different. Because many of the family units are within buildings with non-family units, there was no concern of their buildings standing out from non-family buildings. It appears that all new buildings now have outdoor play areas incorporated on the building site; this is appreciated by families, even though they are not always used.

4. Number of Family Units

a. Objective: “There should be a sufficient number of family units in a project in order to give children peers to play with; to encourage a sense of community; and to support provision of adequate outdoor and indoor amenities for families and children.”

b. Criteria: “Twenty family units in a single project is the suggested minimum.

c. Discussion: The most important factor is promoting a sense of belonging and identification with a development is the design and location of the common open space.”

d. **Comment:** Respondents made no comments on the number of family units, although a worthy topic of further research is to determine if the units designed for families are actually being occupied by them. Many questionnaire respondents reported using their additional bedrooms for another use other than sleeping, thus suggesting that these units are not being used for families and that FCN is not achieving its maximum occupancy.

Guidelines for Project Design

1. Hierarchy of Spaces

a. Objective: “To ensure that residents and visitors can easily distinguish among the private, semi-private (areas for the use of residents only), semi-public (accessible to the public but still on-site), and public realms in and around a development.”

- b. Discussion: “Experience with high-density family projects in Vancouver clearly indicates that satisfaction with common outdoor open space increases as residents have control over its use and as outsiders are effectively prevented from entering it uninvited.”
- c. **Comment:** The fact that virtually no respondents voiced a concern over the hierarchy of spaces suggests that it is a relative non-issue for residents. However, a number of respondents did suggest that they would like the opportunity to interact more freely, and take control, over their common outdoor open spaces.

2. Common Open Space:

- a. Objective: “There should be appropriate open space to meet the on-site needs of children and adults.”
- b. Criteria: “The entire site should be designed to withstand use by children.”
- c. Discussion: “Landscape materials must stand up to wear and tear. Landscaping should be designed to create varied spaces within a large common open space and to use a mixture of hard and soft surfaces. Materials should be selected to be interesting and safe. The extent to which sunlight will penetrate into the common, open spaces of a project will affect its usage. The open space should be located and designed to maximize sunlight access, especially in the winter.”
- d. **Comment:** Families indicated that common open spaces are falling short with respect to what is described above. Lack of sunlight was noted by some and nearly all mentioned that the children’s play equipment provided is particularly unimaginative. It also sounds like many common outdoor spaces are highly manicured and don’t lend themselves well to unstructured and creative play, particularly with natural materials. It would appear that this guideline is not fully being implemented in much of FCN.

3. Outdoor Play Areas for Children

- a. Objective: “Children of all ages should have easy access to appropriately located, designed and landscaped outdoor play areas suited to their developmental and play needs.”
- b. Discussion: “Separation of adjacent play areas for different age groups may be achieved either by landscaping surface treatment, or a change of grade within the common open space. Both preschool and school-aged children require opportunities for active and quiet play, for group and individual play, for structured and creative play. Play equipment should be chosen to provide children with a variety of experiences. Opportunities for water and sand play are especially important. Provision of toilet facilities which are accessible to children from outdoor play areas is desirable. The value of some covered play area for rainy days should be considered. Amenity areas for teenagers tend often to be overlooked at the planning stage. This oversight can lead to problems later. Consider the on-site recreation needs and patterns of teens. Teenagers need places close to home as they have less time for recreation. They will congregate in informal gathering places. There should be places for sitting and overlooking other activities. Some of the area could be covered for rainy weather. Teenagers will readily use available outdoor space for informal ball games. Appropriate design solutions include a small court for shooting baskets or a windowless wall suitable for practicing tennis strokes.”

- c. **Comment:** Families agree with this guideline but state that it isn't fully being implemented in FCN. In particular, what is missing is places where children can play in a variety of different ways: actively, quietly, solitarily, in groups, creatively, structured. There is also very little weather protected play areas, despite Vancouver's precipitous climate. Finally, teenagers continue to be a largely overlooked group, a tendency that is explicitly referenced in this guideline. Although we may be aware of their needs, clearly more needs to be done to accommodate their needs. No parents or children mentioned the need for more toilet facilities which may suggest that this component is being provided for.

4. Supervision of Children's Play

- a. Objective: Recognize that small children require supervision while playing in common outdoor and indoor play spaces and facilitate opportunities to achieve that supervision by parents and other caregivers from within individual units or their private open spaces.
- b. **Comment:** This question was not explicitly asked and few parents explicitly mentioned supervision being an issue save one who said that she'd like a play room with a glass partition to be adjacent to the gym so that she could watch her child while she worked out.

5. Children's Safety

- a. Objective: Design the whole environment (indoor and outdoor common spaces of a development) with safety needs of children in mind.
- b. **Comment:** Safety within the unit or building was not mentioned by any parents, perhaps because these needs are being met.

6. Pedestrian Circulation Routes

- a. Objective: Ensure that both internal and external circulation routes are designed to enhance security, especially for women, children and seniors, and to accommodate the full range of activities which can be expected to occur in them.
- b. Discussion: It is desirable to have more than one elevator, especially in buildings over 4 storeys or where there are seniors/handicapped units on upper storeys, so that one is always available when the other is being repaired or is tied up with moving day.
- c. **Comment:** Residents in market buildings largely reported feeling safe or very safe in their building while residents in non-market buildings were less likely to. It is uncertain as to whether this had to do with pedestrian circulation routes, although this finding merits further investigation. Residents of buildings of 20+ storeys mentioned that two elevators for a building of that size was not sufficient.

7. Common Indoor Amenity Space

- a. Objective: Provide appropriate common indoor amenity space for families with children where individual units are not suited to desired indoor activities.
- b. Criteria: The potential for other indoor amenity spaces such as a hobby room, a workshop, and indoor play space for children, or a teenage lounge should be considered with regard to the anticipated age mix of residents, the ability of

- management to supervise them, and the availability of similar amenities in accessible, nearby community facilities.
- c. **Discussion:** The potential role of common indoor space in creating community interaction and safety should be fostered. The location of common rooms adjacent to other amenity spaces can do a great deal to support interaction among residents and residential satisfaction. Consider including a day care or after-school care facility.
 - d. **Comment:** Families and residents in general agree that the potential role of common indoor spaces in creating community interaction should be fostered. One mentioned explicitly that the location of common rooms in relation to one another promoted this particularly well. Many residents, families and non-families, vocalized a desire for the 'other' indoor amenity spaces suggested above: hobby room, workshop, indoor play space for children, teenage lounge. It would appear however, that few buildings actually have these 'other' amenity spaces.

8. Residents' Parking

- a. **Objective:** Parking should be secure, accessible and adequate for the needs of residents and visitors.
- b. **Criteria:** Casual surveillance of the garage entries should be maximized by locating them near building entries, sidewalks, or other busy pedestrian areas. Underground parking should be well-lit and ventilated. Parking spaces should be assigned to specific units and clearly marked.
- c. **Comment:** Most respondents reported that they felt even in their parking garages and a few attributed this to the good lighting. Interestingly, one fellow mentioned that he felt more secure in his parking spot deep below the surface, away from the parking gate, because villains were likely to lurk up near the gate. The provision of resident parking for most market residents appears to be satisfactory, although not for social and coop housing. Visitor parking in all buildings is reported as being inadequate and a hassle.

Guidelines for Unit Design

1. Unit Size and Interior Layout

- a. **Objective:** The size and layout of units should be appropriate to meet the needs of families with children.
- b. **Criteria:** Family units require a minimum of two bedrooms.
- c. **Discussion:** Dining, living and bedroom spaces should be designed to accommodate a variety of family activities. Consider the layouts of adjacent units to ensure that "sleeping" areas are not affected adversely by proximity to neighbouring "living" areas.
- d. **Comment:** Families with children reported lower levels of satisfaction with nearly all aspects of their unit than households without children, particularly with certain units such as kitchens. Lack of adequate space was raised as a challenge to raising a growing and/or aging family.

2. Privacy

a. Objective: Protect the privacy of family households.

b. *Comments:* Privacy was not an issue for any families, nor for any of the residents in general, despite the close proximity of so many units and the abundance of floor to ceiling windows.

3. Private Open Space

a. Objective: Ensure that each household has a private outdoor space adjacent to its unit for its exclusive use.

b. *Comments:* Open balconies were appreciated by those who had them. Enclosed balconies, however, received mixed ratings.

4. Storage

a. Objective: Provide sufficient bulk storage within the unit or within easy access of the unit.

b. Criteria: In addition to adequately sized clothes and linen closets, a minimum of 5.7m³ (2.3 m²) of bulk storage should be provided for each dwelling unit. Preferably all, but at least 2.8 m³ should be located in a separate storage room within the unit at or near the entry. The balance of the storage space may be located in an easily accessible, secure area of the building. Secure bicycle storage should be provided in accordance with the City's Bicycle Parking Standards.

c. Discussion: Bulk storage space does not include clothes or linen closets.

d. *Comments:* Families, and all residents, strongly support this guideline. Storage can contribute significantly to the satisfaction of living in high-density and is a major source of dissatisfaction for those who don't have it. However, most respondents articulate a lack of enough of this kind of storage and many are paying for bulk storage in other places in the City. We would suggest adding to this guideline an objective of providing sufficient specific storage such as linen closets, drawers and bedroom closets. Ensure also that the walk-in closets provided are large enough for a large man to enter and turn around in when reasonably full.

6.3 Concluding words

How a community decides to use its land and allocate community services and infrastructure offers one of the greatest leverages in our pursuit to achieving sustainable use of land and resources. Living in high-density is still a relatively novel lifestyle choice for Canadians, and North Americans more broadly, which homeowners and families have not embraced as fully as the suburban dream. The findings from the False Creek North post-occupancy evaluation have been useful in highlighting what is and what is not working well for the residents of the compact neighbourhood. It is our sincere hope that these findings will positively contribute to the satisfaction of residents in FCN and in other communities that aspire to be centrally located, high-density, pedestrian and family oriented mixed-use neighbourhoods.

In addition to substantive outcomes, this research exemplifies the value of evaluative thinking in planning and community development. The high overall satisfaction levels of residents living in FCN suggest that the community deserves much of its repute. However, without evaluative research the design and management aspects in need of improvement might otherwise not be identified, documented and addressed. We believe that this study should set a precedence in establishing post-occupancy evaluations as part of planning and development best practice.

We conclude with an excerpt from Brownell³⁵ who began some of this type of post-occupancy work a couple of years ago:

“The balancing out of the new neighbourhoods demographic into one resembling more traditional family areas in the City and region will take more time, but to make a successful transition, it will require more than just time alone. It will require a continued, renewed and evolving effort, and it is the hope of this author that the issues and potential response put forward in this paper will provide food for thought for how this evolving effort might continue to occur.”

It is the hope of this Project Team as well.

³⁵ Brownell, 2006.

CHAPTER VII: RECOMMENDATIONS

1.0 Primary Policy Recommendations

This study yielded positive assessment of life in FCN from the residents' perspective. Most residents would like to continue to live in the neighbourhood for the foreseeable future. Criticisms and suggestions for improvement tend to emerge only with additional probing as part of each research method. In light of this, the general direction of the policy framework implemented during the planning and design stages of the FCN development should be viewed as successful. The process, in general terms, can be interpreted as representing leading practice and can be helpful in informing future urban planning. There are, however, some very important exceptions. Future planning and design policies should be modified to reflect the following recommendations:

- Articulate more strongly policy guidelines framing implementation of social infrastructure, such as schools, to ensure that sufficient facilities are available before the first families move in. Ensure that these facilities are available within growing neighbourhoods such as FCN as the number and concentration of families increase.
- Guide the allocation of space for daycare facilities with a realistic sense of demand and projected growth. Identify and address any loopholes that might weaken such a framework.
- Design more diverse public spaces catering to the specific recreation and play needs of older children, as well as to younger children, rather than simply treating children as a homogenous group with common play and recreation needs.
- Aggressively foster affordable housing schemes targeting middle and modest incomes to ensure a diverse socio-economic mix, an environment appropriate for families and a strong sense of community.
- Target the incorporation of more appropriate and affordable retail outlets from the early stages of the development to meet the needs of residents from a variety of socio-economic grounds. Focus on families, in particular.

While many aspects of the community have been successful, some policies are almost unanimously praised by residents. These issues should be given priority in framing future policy and in guiding similar developments:

- **Connectivity:** Replicate the planning of public space, by which large spaces optimize visual and physical accessibility and by which the water and open space within and outside of the study area are connected to the Seawall.
- **Public Amenities:** Allocate a minimum of the current public space for a diversity of activities including parks for recreation and leisure and an active community centre.
- **Accessibility:** Consider the current amount of public space reserved for parks, recreation and leisure to be a minimum allocation for high-density living. Include an active community centre in similar developments.

- **Tenure and Age Mix:** Persevere with the goal of mixed socio-economic communities; the presence of families with children adds value and community for all residents.

The above recommendations were echoed by respondents and participants in all the research methods. With such strong triangulation validating their importance to the residents, they should be considered primary recommendations.

2.0 Secondary Recommendations

The following secondary recommendations are general areas requiring improvement that were heard strongly throughout the research process but that did not evoke the same degree of consensus and emotion as the foregoing issues. Additional recommendations include specific suggestions by several residents to mitigate the concerns outlined in the secondary recommendations. All recommendations have been listed in order of importance and targeted to each of the development community, civic sector and management bodies.

2.1 Secondary Recommendations to the Development Community

SAFETY

- ♦ Install garage gates with separate controls for the exit and entrance such that both do not automatically open at the same time.
- ♦ Install a second gate or ‘arm’ in all parkade entrances and exits to ensure that residents must stop while the gate is closing behind them so as to prevent intruders from entering through the parkade doors.
- ♦ Prioritize perceptions of safety during periods of construction by installing more lighting and keeping areas well manicured and patrolled.

BUILDINGS

- ♦ Address inadequacies with the quantity, distribution and management of visitor parking.
- ♦ Design outdoor building common spaces with adequate sun exposure.
- ♦ Design indoor and outdoor building amenity space with particular attention to the special behavioural needs of families and for unforced informal social encounters and spontaneous use.
- ♦ In design of amenity spaces, recognise the unique needs of specific age groups of children, especially youth (ages 8-14).
- ♦ Revisit in-house elevator allocation policies and regulations to ensure that sufficient elevators are built to satisfy residents, particularly in 20+ story buildings.
- ♦ Consider creative ways to optimize vacant space within the building to accommodate additional personal storage.
- ♦ Install outdoor furniture and facilities such as benches and barbecues in shared outdoor areas of the building.
- ♦ Reserve common space within the buildings, but outside of units, for bicycle storage.

UNITS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Be creative about adding more in-suite storage, both general and specific; look to other countries for innovation. ♦ Provide outdoor balconies for all units. ♦ Improve noise-mitigating features in all buildings, especially those located near busy streets or commercial areas. ♦ Use thermal comfort and mitigating measures on windows to obscure direct sun, such as UV films, overhangs or window coverings. ♦ Design windows that can open as widely as possible even when blinds are drawn so that residents do not have to compromise ventilation for privacy and vice versa. ♦ Avoid designing L-shaped units that waste space with hallways, wherever possible.
COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Design buildings with sufficient indoor and outdoor common space to allow for casual encounters, spontaneous activity and organized events for building residents. ♦ Design outdoor spaces within buildings and between buildings for predictable <i>uses</i>, as well as for <i>aesthetics</i>.
SUSTAIN ABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Design for passive cooling with the use of retractable awnings, for example. ♦ Specify quiet energy-efficient appliances (especially dishwashers) and energy-efficient building systems in all units.

2.2 Secondary Recommendations to the Civic Sector

PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Repeat the ‘open’ landscaping’ concept that has been used successfully to contribute to a sense of safety appropriate for parks in a dense residential area. ♦ Reserve more spaces specifically for dogs. Investigate the possibility of turning George Wainborn Park into an off-leash park using appropriate landscaping features to separate the children’s play area from the proposed off-leash area. ♦ Provide biodegradable bags for picking-up dog feces in parks and along the Seawall. ♦ Place more garbage bins in parks. ♦ Provide more amenities for leisure activities along the Seawall and in the parks including: weather protection, public barbecues, chairs and benches, particularly sociopetal seating that supports conversations and interaction. ♦ Design and provide age-specific play and recreation spaces, services and activities for children and youth. ♦ Consider the allocation of recreation facilities in future developments for youth activities, such as a swimming pool, skating rink and water park. ♦ Use smaller parks to improve connections between the larger green spaces and to break up the sense of density caused by tall residential buildings.
SHOPS & SERVICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Encourage more retail and commercial space, particularly with patios and pedestrian-friendly zones. ♦ Continue to support the Roundhouse and its activities for people of all ages. ♦ Make more funds available for free activities for youth. ♦ Make space and funds available for a youth-centred space such as a club that accommodates unstructured activity based on the needs of local young people.

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| MOBILITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Promote and facilitate the growth of car cooperatives, as these appear to offer some residents the options and flexibility that they need to part completely with their vehicles, options that transit cannot provide. ◆ Conduct further research into why so few residents use bicycles to commute and support policies and programs to make Vancouver a more bicycle-friendly city. ◆ Attempt to address barriers that prevent residents from giving up their vehicles completely. |
| SAFETY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consider the ‘eyes on the street’ effect that was successfully implemented in FCN to be leading practice. This contributes significantly to a sense of safety in the neighbourhood. ◆ Install more lighting in the parks and along the Seawall, taking into account current principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). ◆ Trim back unruly and high vegetation in the U-shaped seating area in the northwest corner of David Lam Park. |
| BUILDINGS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Revisit design guidelines and regulations related to the location of elevators in high-rise buildings to ensure a sufficient elevator to resident ratio. ◆ Revisit City bylaws that prohibit resident use of parking stalls for storage. ◆ Plan to reduce traffic along Pacific Boulevard. |
| COMMUNITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Recognise that subsidized housing and cooperatives attract families with children and create community, a valuable asset for all residents; use such evidence to counter NIMBYism against such developments. ◆ Conduct multicultural planning in the neighbourhood and further investigate reasons for division along ethnic lines. ◆ Consider the establishment of cafés along the waterfront in certain areas to stimulate a sense of activity and community. |
| SUSTAIN ABILITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Locate community gardens in locations that receive good sun and in public places perceived to be safe. ◆ Provide appropriate funding and staffing for these initiatives. ◆ For the existing garden, secure the premises with a high fence and establish membership arrangements so that gardeners will know that their plots are not being compromised. |

2.3 Secondary Recommendations to the Management Bodies

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| SAFETY | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Encourage provision of 24-hour concierge service, as this contributes greatly to residents' sense of safety. |
| BUILDING | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Consider alternative methods for exhibiting visitor parking status such as allowing visitors to register the car with the concierge in buildings with a concierge.◆ Negotiate arrangements so that parking spots reserved for businesses can be used by visitors in the evenings.◆ Install patio furniture, BBQs and children's play equipment in buildings' outdoor common spaces to increase use and support neighbourliness. |

3.0 Additional Recommendations

Additional recommendations include specific suggestions by several residents to mitigate the concerns outlined in the secondary recommendations. Again, all recommendations have been listed in order of importance and targeted to each of the development community, civic sector and management bodies.

3.1 Additional Recommendations to the Development Community

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| SAFETY | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Ensure that FOB security systems are implemented in all buildings of all tenure types.◆ Repeat the lighting and layout used for building garages, as these appear to have been successful and have contributed to residents' sense of safety. |
| BUILDINGS | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Install specific play areas and equipment for children of all ages, including youth (ages 8-14) in shared outdoor areas of the building.◆ Beautify lobbies so as to create a good first impression of which residents can be proud; provide seating, planters and flowers.◆ Install intercoms in all amenity rooms that are suitable for hosting events, such as party rooms and games rooms in all buildings, including social housing and cooperatives.◆ Consider ways to offer more amenities for social and cooperative housing without restrictive cost increases; amenities are valuable to children and these buildings have a high proportion of households with children.◆ Provide separate parking stalls for trades people during working hours; locate the stalls near elevators and allocate adequate unloading space.◆ Design parkades with sufficient space to avoid conflict of uses; for example, garbage collection should not disrupt visitor parking spaces.◆ Reserve more spaces in building parkades for cooperative cars. |

UNITS

- ◆ Include a linen closet in all units.
- ◆ Provide for at least one pantry-type closet where residents can store large items.
- ◆ Provide kitchen storage for specific uses, such as cabinets and drawers of adequate size.
- ◆ Ensure that all walk-in closets are large enough for a grown man to turn around in when the closet is reasonably full.
- ◆ Provide for a wide range of unit sizes to meet various resident needs and family compositions.
- ◆ Ensure that the design of enclosed balconies allows for future modification; accommodate this in City bylaw strata title arrangements.
- ◆ Design open balconies so that they permit drainage without spilling onto floors below.
- ◆ Use glass or Lucite for open balcony railings.
- ◆ Consider the ease of cleaning when installing any materials that may be subject to extensive or extreme use, such as balcony flooring which may easily get dirty,
- ◆ Do not include floor-to-ceiling windows in bedrooms.
- ◆ Design floor-to-ceiling windows with the optional installation of standard-sized panels that can be easily added to permit more flexibility for privacy and furnishability. Provide information to residents on where they can purchase additional panels.
- ◆ Use reflective or semi-reflective windows to obscure views into the units during the day, particularly in lower level units.
- ◆ Ensure that rooms are of conventional room dimensions, particularly in smaller units that need to maximize space. Avoid angled or odd-shaped walls.
- ◆ Use pocket doors when possible to save space.
- ◆ Include overhead light fixtures in all rooms, as they minimize the need for freestanding lamps, thereby saving space.
- ◆ Do not locate power outlets and overhead light fixtures in odd locations. Locate them with furniture arrangement in mind.
- ◆ In close-plan kitchens, ensure that kitchen walls are not load-bearing for ease of renovation.
- ◆ Design open-plan kitchens to be as adaptable as possible to allow for the future insertion of walls.
- ◆ Locate bathrooms and bedrooms so they are not accessible directly from living areas, wherever possible.
- ◆ Design for visual and acoustic privacy to bathrooms and bedrooms.
- ◆ Design for soundproofing for both horizontally and vertically adjacent units.
- ◆ Avoid locating bedrooms adjacent to each other, wherever possible.
- ◆ Maintain the same levels of acoustic insulation all buildings, including non-market.
- ◆ Locate all bedrooms away from busy streets such as Pacific Boulevard, as much as possible.
- ◆ Install triple-pane glass on windows that face major streets for noise insulation.
- ◆ Maintain wide entrances and hallways to create a sense of space and to allow for evolving needs of senior residents, such as wheelchair and electric chair use.

**SUSTAIN
ABILITY**

- ◆ Ensure that the energy-efficient technologies installed achieve their desired performance.

3.2 Additional Recommendations to the Civic Sector

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Further explore the size and distribution of marinas that are appropriate for the area.◆ Using leading practice research and design guidelines, design playgrounds to be more adventurous, interactive and stimulating. Consider incorporating natural features and more tactile stimulation such as vegetation, sand and wood stumps.◆ Design fountains for their ability to provide interesting landscaping and to mimic the natural environment. Avoid decorative ‘spray’ fountains.◆ Emphasize the historical aspect of the Roundhouse Plaza during the space’s re-design and add plants, shade trees and seating places to increase the Plaza’s functionality.◆ Integrate more public access to the natural shoreline.◆ Consider choosing public art with less metallic components, as these are generally disliked.◆ Add more small-scale soft landscaping features such as plants and flowers, creating more “intimate” spaces and prioritizing native plants where possible.◆ Encourage a farmers market in the Roundhouse Plaza as a means of enhancing the vibrancy of that underutilized space. |
| SHOPS & SERVICES | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Be creative about encouraging commercial diversity such as a weekly public farmers market. |
| MOBILITY | <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Ameliorate wayfinding along the Seawall in FCN, with particular attention to bicycle and pedestrian route separation, specifically at the following locations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ At the foot of Davie Street on the bicycle path heading east: consider changing the pavement colour heading up the ramp and into the traffic circle so that cyclists do not mistake this for the bicycle route. Replace the sign at this location to ensure that it is clear that cyclists are not intended to follow the ramp.○ At the foot of Homer Street: move the concrete blocks to make it easier for cyclists to pass without risk of injury. Provide more appropriate, targeted lighting at this location so that cyclists are better able to see the blocks at night.○ Add clear signage to the archway at 1000 Beach to direct cyclists heading west to follow the Seawall, rather than head straight under the arch.○ Improve the Seabreeze Walk route between Granville and Burrard to be more cyclist-friendly by installing ramps instead of tapered curbs. If possible, integrate the cycling route to the Seawall route rather than redirecting cyclists through traffic.◆ Recognise that high transit fares are a barrier to transit use, even for middle-income residents. |

SAFETY

- ◆ Consider providing opportunities for more commercial areas at street level to increase ‘eyes on the street’.
- ◆ Develop ways to buffer residential zones from entertainment zones.
- ◆ Consider the need for more police and security patrols in the Yaletown area because it is affected by bar and club ‘spill-over.’
- ◆ Conduct regular programs to clean up needles in the neighbourhood and continue public education programs about drug use.

BUILDINGS

- ◆ Stagger building placement to maximize views from units; this policy has been successfully implemented in FCN to the satisfaction of residents.
- ◆ Review polices to mandate two elevators (even a smaller secondary one) in buildings greater than four stories and three elevators in buildings greater than twenty stories.

COMMUNITY

- ◆ Consider hosting more community events, using the Roundhouse Plaza in particular.
- ◆ Organize more community entertainment and other events to promote a sense of community.
- ◆ Host events that will celebrate ethnic diversity and foster inclusion and mixing between people of different ethnicities.
- ◆ Incorporate a cultural focus into the Roundhouse.
- ◆ Cater more activities to seniors to help integrate them into community activities and counter any sense of isolation.

3.3 Additional Recommendations to the Management Bodies

PARKS

- ◆ Enforce on-leash zones once additional off-leash space is designated.
- ◆ Enforce fines for not picking up dog feces.

MOBILITY

- ◆ Reserve more parkade spaces for cooperative car companies.

SAFETY

- ◆ Consider co-operating with other buildings’ stratas to fund bicycle patrols.

BUILDINGS

- ◆ Program adequate time on the lobby entrance buzzer security feature to allow visitors (especially older people) to enter the building and elevator.
- ◆ Allow FOB access to stair doors in buildings where this is not currently available.
- ◆ Limit the use of FOB to critical doors of safety concern.
- ◆ Use weight or motion sensors (rather than a FOB access card) to allow people to exit the parkade.
- ◆ Take measures at a building management level to promote a sense of community that will overcome the barriers implemented through the FOB system and that will contribute to added security through a sense of neighbourliness. Measures include: encouraging residents to host activities in the amenity rooms such as games nights, children's activities, movies and sports games.
- ◆ Consider simplifying the reservation procedures for common space so as to encourage more frequent use, spontaneous use and some common use, in addition to pre-booked privately reserved use of amenity rooms.
- ◆ Program the common outdoor spaces to increase use.
- ◆ Allow for flexibility of use of the common outdoor spaces and include provision for more active uses.
- ◆ Provide for basic supplies such as dishes and utensils in the party room to permit easier catering of events.
- ◆ Install intercoms in all amenity rooms that are suitable for hosting events such as party rooms and games rooms in all buildings including social housing and cooperatives.
- ◆ Allow for some flexibility in provision of standard window coverings that can change with trends and availability of supplies in standard stores.
- ◆ Revisit building rules governing the use of common outdoor space to ensure that restrictions of activities reflect the majority of residents' preferences.

COMMUNITY

- ◆ Cooperate with other stratas to organize community block parties.
- ◆ Attempt to foster community through building events such as sporting events, games nights and movie nights.
- ◆ Carefully consider trade-offs inherent in rules governing indoor and outdoor amenity use as these may placate some residents at the expense of the building's sense of community and suitability for children.
- ◆ Cooperate with other stratas to form a neighbourhood association.

**SUSTAIN
ABILITY**

- ◆ Provide explicit instructions and possibly even training on how to sort recyclable materials. Provide this information in a variety of languages reflective of the ethnic diversity of the community.

4.0 Recommendations for Further Research and Continued Community Engagement

The following is a list of areas that merit further activity and research in order to better understand the community and how to integrate evaluation into planning best practices.

- ◆ Prepare planning and design guidelines for interiors and exteriors based on these findings and further study.
- ◆ Conduct trade-off analyses to understand better the attributes in unit, building and other community design elements that contribute most highly to resident satisfaction.
- ◆ Track residents leaving FCN to determine what factors are determining their out migration.
- ◆ Consider locating residents who have moved previously to determine their motives for leaving.
- ◆ Determine which units have experienced the lowest turnover rates and discuss with these residents their reasons for not leaving their unit and their community.
- ◆ Conduct periodic post-occupancy evaluations of FCN over time at ten-year intervals to determine how the community is evolving.
- ◆ Undertake comparative post-occupancy evaluations, comparing developments with differing densities, populations, locations, amenities and design.
- ◆ Incorporate the evaluative framework and critical thinking inherent in post-occupancy evaluations into standard pedagogy for students in planning, architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, design, recreation, child care, social research and development.
- ◆ Create evaluative frameworks based on target objectives, outputs and evaluation criteria during planning stages to establish a baseline for post-occupancy evaluation work.
- ◆ Integrate post-occupancy evaluations as part of best practice in planning, architecture, design and development.
- ◆ Conduct Building Performance Evaluations to monitor resource flows within buildings.
- ◆ Conduct further research and incorporate adaptability principles in unit, building and public space design as a means of adding flexibility and longevity to the community.
- ◆ Continue engagement with interested members of the FCN community developing action plans to address priority recommendations.
- ◆ Share this information with interested bodies through increased public relations and communication efforts.

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Appendices for Chapter 5 - Mail-out Questionnaire

Appendix A - Questionnaire

Appendix B - Frequencies of responses

Appendix C - Summary of cross-tabulations performed



School of Community and Regional Planning
University of British Columbia

October 26, 2007

Dear Resident,

We are writing about a research study at The University of British Columbia's **School of Community and Regional Planning**. The purpose of this study is to better understand the experience of living in False Creek North from the residents' perspective. The City of Vancouver is a partner in this survey questionnaire. We have contacted you to participate in this study because you live in the study area.

Enclosed with this letter is a questionnaire that we are eager for you to fill out. It concerns your home, your neighbourhood, and your community. We are sending the questionnaire to 3500 households in False Creek North. We would be very appreciative if you would fill out the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed addressed, stamped envelope by **November 12th, 2007**. We estimate that completing the questionnaire will require approximately 20 minutes of your time.

Participation in this study is **voluntary**. I can assure you that your responses will be kept absolutely **confidential**. Completed questionnaires will be stored in a locked, secure office at UBC, and only the project team will have access to them.

Our research is intended to promote more livable city centres both in Vancouver and abroad. By completing the questionnaire you will be helping city planners and developers understand how to design better high-density urban communities. If you have further questions regarding this study, you may contact our research director, **Nancy Hofer**, at the School of Community and Regional Planning by phone at 778-239-8733 or by email at ndee@interchange.ubc.ca.

We thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Larry Beasley
Distinguished Practice Professor, UBC

And don't forget to mark your calendars...

We are hosting a **HAVE YOUR SAY! Day** at the **Roundhouse Community Centre**. This public event will provide opportunities for adults and children to tell us about their community. Refreshments and door prizes will be provided along with face painting and games for the younger residents of False Creek North.

Saturday, November 3rd

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Roundhouse—look for our signs and our volunteers to direct you to the event

As part of the day's event, we are hosting an afternoon of facilitated, in-depth, group conversations among adult residents of False Creek North about issues that matter. We are calling this event the **HAVE YOUR SAY! Café**. If you would like to participate, please contact **Nancy Hofer** at **778 239 8733** by **November 2nd**.

Join us and HAVE YOUR SAY!

POST-OCCUPANCY EVALUATION OF FALSE CREEK NORTH

Dear resident, thank you for agreeing to complete our questionnaire.

We'll begin by discussing your dwelling unit (apartment, condominium, townhome) and building:

1. Is this your primary residential address? (please circle one)
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

2. Do you rent or own this dwelling unit? (please circle one)

a) Rent from landlord/property management company	e) Co-op
b) Rent from family	f) Social housing
c) Own with mortgage	g) Other (please specify): _____
d) Own without mortgage	

3. As a resident of False Creek North, in which neighbourhood do you reside? (please circle one)

a) Yaletown Edge	e) Beatty Mews
b) Roundhouse Neighbourhood	f) Other (please specify): _____
c) Quayside	g) Don't know
d) Beach	

4. Of the following, which best describes your dwelling unit? (please circle one)

a) Studio	d) 2 bedroom
b) 1 bedroom	e) 2 bedroom and den
c) 1 bedroom and den	f) 3 bedroom or larger

5. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the design and layout of your dwelling unit: (please circle one number for each of the following)

	Very Dissatisfied			Very Satisfied		
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
a) Kitchen	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
b) Main bedroom	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
c) Living room	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
d) Bathroom(s)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
e) Balcony/private outdoor space	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
f) Additional bedroom(s) (if applicable)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
g) In-unit storage	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
h) Overall unit	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Additional comments?

6. If there is a storage area provided in your dwelling unit (typically a small windowless room of about 40 sq. ft.), how is this space used? (please circle one)
- a) Primarily storage
 b) Den/office
 c) Eating area
 d) Sleeping area
- e) Other (please specify): _____
 f) Not applicable (N/A)
7. If you have some enclosed balcony space in your dwelling unit, how is this space used? (please circle all that apply)
- a) Typical balcony use (plants, casual seating, etc.)
 b) Den/office space
 c) Eating area
- d) Sleeping area
 e) Other (please specify): _____
 f) Not applicable (N/A)

If you have a two-bedroom (or larger) dwelling unit, please complete Question 8, otherwise skip to Question 9.

8. What do you use your additional bedroom for? (please circle all that apply)
- a) A bedroom for a full-time resident
 b) A guest bedroom
 c) An office or den
 d) A play space
- e) Other (please specify): _____
9. What would you change about your dwelling unit, if anything? (please use the space below)

10. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the following features of your building: (please circle one number for each)

	Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied	
	1	2	3	4	5	
a) Lobby design						N/A
b) Availability and number of elevators	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
c) Outdoor open space	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
d) Amenities (gym, pool, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
e) Resident parking	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
f) Visitor parking	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Additional comments?

11. How safe do you feel in the following? (Please circle one number for each)

	Very Unsafe				Very Safe	
	1	2	3	4	5	
a) Your dwelling unit	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
b) Your building	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
c) The False Creek North Community	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Additional comments?

If you have children 12 years or younger, please complete Questions 24-27. If you do not have children, please skip to Question 28.

24. Please rate your overall satisfaction with your children’s play spaces **within your dwelling unit and building**: (please circle one number for each)

	Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied	
	1	2	3	4	5	
a) The amount of play space						N/A
b) Variety of play space						N/A
c) Safety (supervised play space)						N/A
d) Other (please specify):						N/A

25. Please rate your overall satisfaction with your children’s play spaces in the **outdoor parks, plazas and open spaces** in False Creek North: (please circle one number for each)

	Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied	
	1	2	3	4	5	
a) The amount of play space						N/A
b) Variety of play space						N/A
c) Access to play space						N/A
d) Safety (supervised play space)						N/A
e) Other (please specify):						N/A

26. Do any of the following present challenges to raising your family in False Creek North? (please circle one for each)

a) Adequate space in dwelling unit	Yes	No	No Opinion
b) Access to public amenities (parks, community centre, etc.)	Yes	No	No Opinion
c) School/daycare	Yes	No	No Opinion
d) Affordability	Yes	No	No Opinion
e) Safety	Yes	No	No Opinion
f) Mobility	Yes	No	No Opinion
g) Access to local facilities and services	Yes	No	No Opinion
h) Other (please specify): _____			

27. Based on your current living situation, how satisfied are you with the ability of your dwelling unit to support your family’s evolving needs? (please circle one number)

Very Dissatisfied					Very Satisfied	
1	2	3	4	5	N/A	

Additional Comments:

Next, we would like to ask you about your time living in False Creek North:

28. How long have you lived at this address?
- a) Less than 6 months
 - b) 6 to 12 months
 - c) 1 year to 3 years
 - d) 3 years to 5 years
 - e) More than 5 years
29. Prior to moving to this address, where did you live? (please circle all that apply)
- a) In False Creek North
 - b) Elsewhere in Downtown Vancouver
 - c) Elsewhere in Vancouver
 - d) Elsewhere in Metro Vancouver (GVRD)
 - e) Outside of Metro Vancouver (in Canada)
 - f) Outside of Canada
30. Please use the space provided below to explain the factors that influenced your decision to move to False Creek North.

31. How long do you plan to live at this address?
- a) Less than 6 months
 - b) 6 to 12 months
 - c) 1 year to 3 years
 - d) 3 years to 5 years
 - e) More than 5 years
 - f) Don't know

*If you **do not** have definite plans to move in the next 12 months, please skip to Question 34*

32. If you are definitely planning on moving from your dwelling unit, please indicate where you are likely moving to: (Please circle one)
- a) Elsewhere in False Creek North
 - b) Elsewhere in Downtown Vancouver
 - c) Elsewhere in Vancouver
 - d) Elsewhere in Metro Vancouver (GVRD)
 - e) Outside of Metro Vancouver (in Canada)
 - f) Outside of Canada
33. If you are definitely planning on moving, please explain your reasons for moving in the space provided below:

34. Do you agree with the following statement:
"I would recommend living in False Creek North to other people." (please circle one)
- Yes No

Finally, we have a few questions for demographic and statistical purposes:

35. What is your sex? M F
36. What is the primary language spoken at home? _____
37. What is your age? _____
38. Including yourself, please specify the total number of people in your household in the following age groups.:
- 0-5 ____ 6-12 ____ 13-17 ____ 18-24 ____ 25-39 ____ 40-59 ____ 60-74 ____ 75+ ____
39. From the following list, please indicate your annual household income (please circle one):
- a) Less than \$20,000
 - b) \$20,000-\$49,999
 - c) \$50,000-\$79,999
 - d) \$80,000-\$149,999
 - e) \$150,000 or more

Please use the space below for any additional comments regarding your experience living in False Creek North. You can add additional pages if you wish. We really value your comments.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed provided for your convenience. Please return your completed questionnaire by November 12, 2007. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Nancy Hofer at ndee@interchange.ubc.ca

In addition to this questionnaire, we are conducting interviews with residents to gain further information for our study. If you are interested in participating in an interview, please provide your name, contact phone number or e-mail and we will contact you with further details.

Name (please print) _____ **Ph** _____ **Email** _____

1. Is this your primary address?

	n	Prop.
Yes	472	0.950
No	25	0.050
	497	

2. Do you rent or own this dwelling unit?

	n	Prop.
Rent from landlord	104	0.209
Rent from family	10	0.020
Own with mortgage	206	0.414
Own without mortgage	153	0.308
Co-op	12	0.024
Social Housing	10	0.020
Other	2	0.004
	497	

3. As a resident of False Creek North, in which neighbourhood do you reside?

	n	Prop.
Yaletown Edge	81	0.165
Roundhouse Neighb	170	0.346
Quayside	47	0.096
Beach	93	0.189
Beatty Mews	22	0.045
Other	51	0.104
Don't know	28	0.057
	492	

4. Of the following, which best describes your dwelling unit?

	n	Prop.
Studio	7	0.014
One bedroom	32	0.064
One bedroom and den	110	0.221
Two bedroom	72	0.145
Two bedroom and den	204	0.410
Three bedroom or larger	72	0.145
	497	

5. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the design and layout of your dwelling unit:

	Very Dissatisfied			Very Satisfied		N
	1	2	3	4	5	
Kitchen	18	40	89	210	136	493
Main bedroom	6	25	94	205	160	490
Living room	6	20	79	189	200	494
Bathroom(s)	9	28	109	205	141	492
Balcony/private outdoor space	37	69	92	110	112	420
Additional bedroom(s)	10	21	88	140	70	329
In-suite storage	36	60	93	142	125	456
Overall unit	1	5	63	277	141	487

6. If there is a storage area provided in your dwelling unit how is this space used?

	n	Prop.
Storage	330	0.667
Den or Office	44	0.089
Sleeping area	2	0.004
Pantry	27	0.055
Closet	5	0.010
Laundry	9	0.018
Other	8	0.016
NA	70	0.141
	495	

7. If you have some enclosed balcony space in your dwelling unit, how is this space used?

Typical Balcony use	Den or Office	Eating Area	Sleeping Area	Other		
	116	76	15	8	33	248

8. What do you use your additional bedroom for?

Resident bedroom	Guest Room	Office/den	Playspace	Other		
	105	154	107	8	48	422

9. What would you change about your dwelling unit, if anything?

This question was open ended and responses cannot be tabulated.

10. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the following features of your building:

	Very Dissatisfied				Very Satisfied		N
	1	2	3	4	5		
Lobby Design	19	47	122	181	124	493	
Elevators	28	43	103	164	154	492	
Outdoor Open Space	14	30	113	170	153	480	
Amenities	23	31	49	158	224	485	
Resident Parking	17	21	84	178	191	491	
Visitor Parking	58	67	116	147	103	491	

11. How safe do you feel in the following?

	Very Unsafe				Very Safe		N
	1	2	3	4	5		
Your dwelling unit	7	4	12	99	375	497	
Your building	7	13	31	165	279	495	
In the FCN Community	7	8	64	240	175	494	

12. How often do you visit the parks, plazas and open spaces in False Creek North?

	n	Prop.
Every day	136	0.276
2-4 times a week	180	0.366
Once a week	92	0.187
Twice a month	44	0.089
Rarely	40	0.081
	492	

13. What is your favourite park, plaza, or open space in False Creek North?

	Wainborn	Lam	Coopers	Roundhouse	Seawall	Other	No fav	N
	155	210	39	82	382	15	20	903

14. To what extent do you feel the parks, plazas and open spaces in False Creek North serve most of your outdoor recreational/ leisure needs?

	n	Prop.
NA	4	0.008
1	5	0.010
2	32	0.066
3	84	0.172
4	186	0.381
5	177	0.363
	488	

15. What could be changed to better serve your recreation and/ or leisure needs?

More space	More adult rec activities	More children rec activities	Relaxation amenities	Other	No changes	N
	78	94	44	162	103	170
						651

16. How safe do you feel using the parks, plazas or open spaces in False Creek North at the following times?

Daytime			Nigh- time		
	n	Prop.		n	Prop.
Very Safe	382	0.775	Very Safe	61	0.138
Safe	101	0.205	Safe	282	0.639
Unsafe	2	0.004	Unsafe	83	0.188
Very Unsafe	8	0.016	Very Unsafe	15	0.034
	493			441	

17. In a typical week, do you travel beyond a 10-minute walk to meet your day-to-day shopping needs (including groceries, pharmacy, dry cleaning services, pet services, liquor, etc.)?

	n	Prop.
No	194	0.393
Yes	299	0.605
	493	

18. If yes, please indicate why you travel beyond a 10-minute walk to meet your day-to-day needs.

Availability of shops	Affordability of shops	Range of services	personal preference	Other	N
	114	180	124	99	32
					549

19. In a typical week, please select your primary means of travel within False Creek North.

	n	Prop.
Automobile	32	0.065
Bicycle	4	0.008
Other	1	0.002
Transit	8	0.016
Walk	450	0.909
	495	

20. How many of the following does your household own?

Vehicles	n	Prop.	Bicycles	n	Prop.
0	48	0.097	0	173	0.348
1	294	0.592	1	122	0.245
2	132	0.266	2	146	0.294
3+	23	0.046	3+	56	0.113
	497			497	

21. If you do own one or more bicycles where do you store them?

Unit	Building common bike storage	On street	Other	N
38	263	1	38	340

22. The City permits residents to operate home-based businesses in their dwelling unit, subject to certain limits. Does any adult resident work primarily from your dwelling unit?

Adult 1

	n	Prop.
Does not work	127	0.266
Works inside the unit	56	0.117
Works outside the unit	294	0.615
	478	

Adult 2

	n	Prop.
Does not work	111	0.336
Works from inside the unit	1	0.003
Works inside the unit	34	0.103
Works outside the unit	184	0.558
	330	

23. For the adults who work outside the unit, what is the normal mode of travel to work?

Adult 1			Adult 2		
	n	Prop.		n	Prop.
Bicycle	6	0.015	Bicycle	29	0.009
Car	180	0.456	Car	116	0.520
Does not travel to work	36	0.091	Does not travel to work	30	0.135
Other	24	0.061	Other	14	0.063
Transit	30	0.076	Transit	17	0.076
Walk	119	0.301	Walk	44	0.197
	395			223	

24. Please rate your overall satisfaction with your children’s play spaces within your dwelling unit and building:

	Very Dissatisfied					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
The amount of space	12	12	31	16	13	84
The variety of space	16	20	28	10	10	84
Safety (supervised space)	12	10	17	20	14	73

25. Please rate your overall satisfaction with your children’s play spaces in the outdoor parks, plazas and open spaces in False Creek North:

	Very Dissatisfied					N
	1	2	3	4	5	
The amount of space	2	3	15	40	25	85
The variety of space	2	4	26	38	15	85
Access to play space	2	0	14	40	28	84
Safety (supervised space)	1	8	9	36	17	71

26. Do any of the following present challenges to raising your family in False Creek North?

	Yes	No	N
Adequate space in dwelling unit	52	25	77
Access to public amenities	13	68	81
School/daycare	41	37	78
Affordability	53	28	81
Safety	23	60	83
Mobility	12	69	81
Access to local facilities and services	12	67	79

27. Based on your current living situation, how satisfied are you with the ability of your dwelling unit to support your family's evolving needs?

	n	Prop.
Dissatisfied	16	0.176
Neutral	27	0.297
Satisfied	48	0.527
	91	

28. How long have you lived at this address?

	n	Prop.
Less than 6 months	43	0.087
6 months to 12 months	42	0.085
1 year to 3 years	164	0.332
3 years to 5 years	95	0.192
More than 5 years	150	0.304
	494	

29. Prior to moving to this address, where did you live?

	FCN	DT	Elsewhere in Vancouver	Elsewhere in Metro Vanc	Outside of Metro Vanc	Outside of Canada	N
	61	95	137	91	91	52	527

30. Please use the space provided below to explain the factors that influenced your decision to move to FCN.
This question was open ended and responses cannot be tabulated.

31. How long do you plan to live at this address?

	n	Prop.
Less than 6 months	16	0.033
6 months to 12 months	31	0.064
1 year to 3 years	104	0.216
3 years to 5 years	57	0.119
More than 5 years	163	0.339
Don't know	110	0.229
	481	

32. If you are definitely planning on moving from your dwelling unit, please indicate where you are likely moving to:

	n	Prop.
DT	10	0.102
FCN	26	0.265
Metro Van	18	0.184
Outside of Canada	6	0.061
Outside of Metro (in Canada)	15	0.153
Vancouver	23	0.235
	98	

33. If you are definitely planning on moving, please explain your reasons for moving in the space provided below:

This question was open ended and responses cannot be tabulated.

34. Do you agree with the following statement:

"I would recommend living in False Creek North to other people."

	n	Prop.
No	20	0.042
Yes	453	0.956
	473	

35. What is your gender?

	n	Prop.
F	277	0.558
M	219	0.442
	496	

36. What is the primary language spoken at home?

Responses for this question were not tabulated.

37. What is your age?

Responses for this question were not tabulated.

38. Including yourself, please specify the total number of people in your household in the following age groups:

	n	Prop.
18-24	16	0.033
25-39	166	0.342
40-59	190	0.391
60-74	92	0.189
75+	22	0.045
	486	

39. From the following list, please indicate your annual household income

	n	Prop.
Less than 20K	25	0.053
20k-50k	61	0.129
50k-80k	85	0.180
80k-150k	169	0.358
150k or more	132	0.280
	472	

Please use the space below for any additional comments regarding your experience living in False Creek North. You can add additional pages if you wish. We really value your comments.

This question was open ended and responses cannot be tabulated.

Summary of Cross-Tabulations

	represents a relationship significant at the 0.05 level
	represents a relationship not significant at the 0.05 level
	represents a relationship that was not tested

Q	Q2a Tenure	Q3 Neigh.	Q4a Unit Type	Q20 No. of Vehicles	Q24a Children	Q28 Current Residency	Q31 Future Residency	Gender	Age	Income
2a tenure										
3 neighbourhood										
4a unit type										
5 unit design satis										
kitchen										
master										
living room										
bathrooms										
outdoor space										
add. bedrooms										
insuite storage										
overall										
10 building satisf										
lobby design										
elevators										
outdoor space										
amenities										
resident parking										
visitor parking										
11 safety										
in building										
in FCN										
community										
12 visit parks										
14 park meets										
16 safety outdoors										
Daytime										
Nighttime										
17 beyond 10 min										
20 no. of vehicles										
24a children										
24 children play in										
unit/bldg										
amount										
variety										

	safety									
25	children play outdoors amount variety access safety									
26	chlgs to family space in unit access to parks, etc school daycare affordability safety mobility access to fac, serv									
27	evolving needs met									
28	current residency									
31	future residency									
32	moving to where									
37b	age									
38	no of res. (total)									
39	income									

All variables tested are directly from the Questionnaire itself, except for the following variables:

- 2a Tenure Grouped responses into 2 categories: Owners (own with mortgage, own without mortgage, co-op) and Renters (rent from landlord, rent from family, social housing).
- 4a Unit Type Grouped responses into 3 categories: one bedroom (studio, one bedroom, one bedroom and den), two bedroom (two bedroom, two bedroom and den), and three bedroom or larger.
- 24a Children Grouped responses into 2 categories: Children (those who completed the applicable section), and No Children (those who did not complete the applicable section).
- 37b Age Grouped responses into 5 categories: 18-24, 25-39, 40-59, 60-74, and 75+.

Appendices for Chapter 5 - SpeakOut Method

Appendix A	Facilitator prompts per stall
Appendix B	Participant directions per stall
Appendix C	Poster advertising Have your Say! Day
Appendix D	Press release advertising Have your Say! Day
Appendix E	Volunteer prompts

Display Boards - key questions

False Creek North Community:

- Why did you move here?
- Does FCN meet your expectations?
- How does FCN compare to previous neighbourhoods? (In which way)
- Does FCN have a community spirit?

Shops and Services:

- Are your needs met locally?
 - o Bubble prompt: medical services? entertainment? shops? schools and daycare?
- What are your experiences with community services and activities in FCN?
- What are your experiences operating a business in FCN?

Buildings:

- What are your impressions of the architecture in FCN?
- How are the common spaces in your building?
- Do you feel there is a community spirit in your building?

Parks and Plazas:

- What are your favourite outdoor places?
- If you could redesign the Roundhouse plaza, how would you change it?
- Do you find FCN parks suitable for your needs as:
 - o Bubble prompts: an active person? a parent? a senior? a dog owner?

Safety:

- Would you walk alone at night?
- How safe do you feel:
 - o Bubble prompts: in your unit? in your building? in the parks? going into your building?
- When and where do you feel vulnerable?
- Do you feel FCN is safe for your children?

Mobility:

- Can you find your way around?
- What modes of transport do you use and for what purpose?
 - o car? walking? bus? skytrain? ferry? cycling? rollerblading? skateboarding?

Families and children:

- How suitable is FCN for raising a family?
- Will FCN meet the evolving needs of your family?
- How well does FCN meet the play needs of your children?

Units:

- Does the design, layout and size of your unit meet your needs?
- How would you describe the quality of your unit?
 - o Bubble prompts: Privacy? Acoustics? Ventilation? Light? Furnishability? Office? Laundry? Storage? Balcony? Rooms?

Adolescents and Youth:

- How do you like living in FCN/
- Where do you hang out and what do you like to do?
- What would you change about FCN to better suit the needs of your age group?

**FALSE CREEK NORTH POST-OCCUPANCY EVALUATION
AND COMMUNITY EVENTS
Press Release**

For distribution: 25 October 2007

“What’s it like to live in the neighbourhood of False Creek North (FCN)?”

That’s the question being asked of FCN residents by graduate students in UBC’s School of Community and Regional Planning. The UBC researchers are conducting a post-occupancy evaluation of FCN, a planned community with an international reputation for combining high-density city living with family-friendly amenities and public spaces.

As part of their study, the students will be sending out a survey questionnaire to a large sample of FCN households. The City of Vancouver Planning Department is a partner supporting this survey. Questions will address residents’ satisfaction with everything from the design of their buildings and units to the adequacy of community facilities, neighbourhood parks and other public spaces.

A community event, *Have Your Say! Day*, will be held at the Roundhouse Community Centre on November 3rd from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Neighbourhood residents will be able to drop in and voice their opinions through interactive displays, and by participating in a facilitated group conversation called the *Have Your Say! Café*.

Local kids are also included: students at Elsie Roy Elementary School will participate in a “Week with a Camera” exercise in which they will photograph their favourite places in their community, as well as places that cause them concern. Researchers will encourage the young photographers to talk about their photographs as a way of learning about how children experience living in the FCN neighbourhood.

Interviews can be arranged with course instructors Larry Beasley and/or Dr Wendy Sarkissian and students Rebecca Bateman and/or Renee Coull.

For further information, please contact Nancy Hofer:

778-239-8733 or
ndee@interchange.ubc.ca.



HAVE YOUR SAY!
ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD!
IS IT A GOOD PLACE FOR YOUTH TO
LIVE?

- 1) TAKE A LOOK AT THE BIG MAP AND SEE WHICH PLACES YOU LIKE. WHERE DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME?
- 2) TAKE A SMALL PAPER MAP.
- 3) CIRCLE THE OUTDOOR SPACES THAT YOU LIKE TO USE IN GREEN. LABEL THEM AND WRITE WHAT YOU DO THERE AND WHY YOU LIKE THEM.
- 4) CIRCLE THE OUTDOOR SPACES THAT YOU DON'T LIKE TO USE IN RED. WHY DON'T YOU LIKE THEM?
- 5) WHAT SPACE IS YOUR FAVOURITE SPACE? PUT A GOLD STAR HERE. LABEL IT AND WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THIS SPACE.
- 5) TALK TO THE VOLUNTEER ABOUT WHAT CHANGES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THANK YOU
FOR SHARING
YOUR OPINION
ABOUT WHERE YOU LIVE!



HAVE YOUR SAY!
ABOUT YOUR SHOPS, SERVICES AND
FACILITIES!

- 1) LOOK AT THE BIG MAP OF FALSE CREEK NORTH. WHERE ARE THE SHOPS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT YOU USE?
- 2) TAKE A PAPER MAP AND IDENTIFY THE PLACES THAT YOU USE. CIRCLE IN GREEN THE PLACES THAT YOU USE THAT YOU WALK TO. PLEASE LABEL WHAT THESE PLACES ARE.
- 3) CIRCLE IN RED THE PLACES IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD THAT YOU DRIVE TO. PLEASE LABEL THESE PLACES.
- 4) WHICH SHOPS, SERVICES AND FACILITIES DO YOU USE THAT ARE OUTSIDE OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD?
- 5) WHERE ARE THEY AND HOW DO YOU GET THERE? PLEASE WRITE THIS ON THE SPACE BELOW THE MAP.

THANK YOU FOR
HAVING YOUR SAY
ABOUT
FALSE CREEK NORTH!



**HAVE YOUR SAY!
ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD'S PARKS,
PLAZAS, AND PATHWAYS!**

1) DECIDE WHICH TWO OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU.

- Picnic places
- Comfortable places to sit
- Scenic views
- Shelter from the rain
- Ball sports for children
- Playgrounds and spaces for small children
- Tranquil and serene places
- Recreation spaces for youth
- Exercise opportunities for adults
- Spaces for dogs

2) AFTER CHOOSING THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT POINTS, TAKE THE APPROPRIATELY COLOURED POST-IT NOTE.

**3) WRITE YOUR COMMENTS ON YOUR POST-IT NOTES.
YOU CAN EXPLAIN WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT TO YOU AND
WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT IT IN FALSE CREEK NORTH.**

4) POST YOUR COMMENTS ON THE HAVE YOUR SAY! WALL.

**THANK YOU FOR TALKING TO US
ABOUT YOUR
NEIGHBOURHOOD!**



HAVE YOUR SAY! ABOUT YOUR UNITS!

- 1) TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF OUR SAMPLE UNIT DESIGNS AND SEE WHICH ONES LOOK LIKE YOUR UNIT.

- 2) USE THE UNIT 'BUILDING BLOCKS' TO SHOW THE VOLUNTEERS WHAT YOUR UNIT LOOKS LIKE.

- 3) USING THE 'BUILDING BLOCKS' TO VISUALISE YOUR HOME, THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU LIKE AND DISLIKE ABOUT YOUR UNIT. WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE IF YOU COULD?

- 4) TALK TO THE FACILITATOR ABOUT YOUR IDEAS.

- 5) THE RECORDER WILL WRITE U P YOUR IDEAS.

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR COMMENTS!!

Have Your Say About The Neighbourhood!

What do you think about living in False Creek North?



**Saturday 3rd
November, 2007**

10:00am - 4.00pm

**Roundhouse
Community Centre**

Drop in For:

Interactive Displays

Kids Activities

Refreshments & Door Prizes!



We are also looking for volunteers to participate in:

A **Group Discussion** between 2:00pm - 4:00pm on 3rd Nov.

An individual **In-depth Interview**

Contact Nancy from UBC via email at ndee@interchange.ubc.ca or by telephone on 778 239 8733

Have Your Say Day

Prompts for Volunteers



False Creek North Community

- Why did you move here?
 - o *Can you think of any other reasons for moving to this place?*
 - o *What sort of things did you look for when looking for a new place to live?*
- Does False Creek North meet your expectations?
 - o *Would you recommend living in False Creek North to your friends?*
- How does False Creek North compare to previous neighbourhoods (in which way)?
 - o *Do your friends visit more or less regularly than before you moved?*
 - o *How would you compare your current lifestyle to before you moved?*
 - o *How would you describe any changes in your activities since the move (social/ recreational)?*
 - o *Do you feel you spend more or less time with other people since you have moved?*
 - o *Do you feel that you have more or less friends now?*
- Does False Creek North have a community spirit?
 - o *Do you feel that you have more or less friends now?*
 - o *Do you take part in community activities?*
 - o *Do you know your neighbours?*
 - o *Do you trust your neighbours?*
 - o *Are you proud of where you live?*

Shops and Services

- Are your needs met locally?
 - o *Medical services; entertainment; shops; schools and daycare?*
 - o *What facilities do you use outside of the neighbourhood?*
 - o *How often do you shop outside of the neighbourhood?*
 - o *How would you describe the quality of services or facilities available to you?*
 - o *Are you satisfied with the quality of services in your locality?*
- What are your experiences with community services and activities in False Creek North?
 - o *What community services and activities do you use in False Creek North?*
 - o *What community services and activities do you use outside of False Creek North?*
 - o *Of the services used outside of FCN, are they not available in your neighbourhood? Why do you use them?*
 - o *If your family has any special needs, are you able to meet them in your neighbourhood?*
- What are your experiences operating a business in False Creek North?
 - o *Is parking an issue?*
 - o *Does the size of your retail space meet your needs?*
 - o *Are there opportunities for advertising?*

Buildings

- What are your impressions of the architecture in False Creek North?
 - o *What is your impression of how False Creek North Looks?*
 - o *What do you think of FCN views? Which are your favourite?*
 - o *What do you think of your building design?*
 - o *What do you think of your building's exterior appearance?*
 - o *Do you think False Creek North has an exciting skyline?*

- *Visually, are you proud of the building/ neighbourhood you live in?*
- How are the common spaces in your building?
 - *Do you use the common spaces in your building?*
 - *Is there anything you would add or change about the common spaces in your building?*
 - *Is the mail room convenient?*
 - *What is the parking like in your building?*
 - *Do the storage facilities in your building meet your needs? Why or why not?*
 - *Is it easy for visitors to visit you (buzzers, quality of communal space, elevators)?*
 - *What are the elevators like in your building?*
 - *Is there a problem with untidiness in the communal areas of your building?*
- Do you feel there is a community spirit in your building?
 - *Is it easy to make friends with people in your building?*
 - *Do you find you have a chance to socialise with others who live in your building?*
 - *Would you like to get to know more people in your building?*
 - *What do you think could initiate a stronger community spirit in your building?*

Parks and Plaza

- What are your favourite outdoor places (include parks; plazas; playgrounds; seawall; picnic places; football/soccer field/ places to sit/ views/ recreational places)?
 - *Is there somewhere you go regularly?*
 - *Why is the place you mention your favourite outdoor place?*
 - *How often do you use public spaces in your neighbourhoods?*
 - *Who in your family uses these spaces?*
 - *Is there anything you would change about the public spaces?*
 - *Is there enough public spaces?*
- If you could re-design the Roundhouse Plaza, how would you change it?
 - ***For which activities should the space be designed?***
 - ***Which characteristics would support these activities?***
- Do you find False Creek North parks suitable for your needs as (an active person; a parent; a senior; a dog owner)?
 - *Is there conflict between division of space for different user groups?*

These include: parents (ability to supervise children comfortably)

Children (playspaces – variety and quality; organised activities; safe and supervisable spaces)

Seniors (Places to walk, rest, views, gather with friends)

Active persons (cycle, roller blade, organised sports, run etc)

Dog-owners (off-leash and on-leash parks; variety of walking options, dog-friendly areas that avoid conflict with non-dog people.)

Quiet spaces (reading, sitting, passive exercise like yoga and tai chi)

Safety

- Would you walk alone at night?
 - *What makes a place feel safe or unsafe to you?*
 - *Can you think of safe and unsafe places in FCN?*
 - *How do you feel when you are using FCN parks and paths when you are alone?*
 - *In terms of your feelings of personal safety, how does FCN compare to other neighbourhoods in which you have lived?*

- How safe do you feel (in your unit; in your building; in the parks; going into your building)?
 - *Why do you or do you not feel safe?*
 - *Would you change anything to feel safer?*
- When and where do you feel vulnerable in your unit, building, parks, going into your building?
 - *Why do you or do you not feel vulnerable?*
 - *Are there certain times of day/year when you feel most vulnerable?*
- Do you feel False Creek North is safe for your children?
 - *Would you let them play outside alone or with their friends?*
 - *How far from your house might they go?*
 - *Do you think the parks and play facilities are safe for children?*
 - *What do you think could be done to make FCN safer for your children?*

Mobility

- Can you find your way around?
 - *Generally, can you take a direct route to where you need to go?*
 - *Can visitors who are new to the area find their way to your house/apartment/condo?*
 - *Are there definable landmarks to help you navigate around the neighbourhood?*
- What modes of transport do you use and for what purpose (car; walking; bus; skytrain; ferry; cycling; rollerblading; skateboarding)
 - *Do you (or anyone in your household) own a car?*
 - *How frequently and for what purposes do you use it?*
 - *How frequently and for what purposes do you use public transport?*
 - *Is the public transport in FCN sufficient?*
 - *Is the bus stop close by?*
 - *Do you own a bike? If yes, how frequently and for what purpose do you use it?*

Families and Children

- *What are your criteria for a family-friendly neighbourhood?*
- *Does FCN meet these criteria?*
- *Why do you feel FCN is or is not suitable for families?*
- *Are there enough play spaces for children?*
- *What about other services and activities for children?*
- Will False Creek North meet the evolving needs of your family?
 - *Unit: Does the design and layout of your unit suit the needs of your family?*
Are adult and child spaces separated?
Does it feel spacious?
Do your children have room to play?
If you have grown-up children do they have their own space?
 - *If your unit does not meet the need of your family, what changes are you looking for in your new neighbourhood?*
- *Neighbourhood: Are there enough activities for children? Is there anything you would do to make the area more child-friendly?*

Units

- Does the design, layout and size of your unit meet your needs?
 - o *Do you feel you have enough space in your unit (indoor space, outdoor space, size and room dimensions,*
 - o *How easy is it to move around in your unit?,*
 - o *Do you have enough storage space?*
 - o *If you have a bike, where do you store it?,*
 - o *How easy has it been for you to arrange the furniture in your unit?*
 - o *Do you like your balcony?,*
 - o *Do you have enough bathrooms?,*
 - o *How flexible is your unit in terms of how you use the space? For instance, have you needed or created an extra bedroom, an office, a den, a storage room?*
 - o *Do you feel it is easy to host guests in your unit?*
 - o *What, if anything, would you change about your unit?*

- How would you describe the quality of your unit? (privacy; acoustics; ventilation; light; office; laundry; storage; balcony; rooms, fridge, cable, internet, garbage disposal
 - o *What would you recommend changing about the quality of your unit?*
 - o *How would you describe the comfort level of unit?*
 - o *If you work at home, is the unit suitable for this (electrical outlets, views, furnishing, light, separation or private and non-private areas)?*

Adolescents and Youth

- How do you, as a person aged 12-24, like living in False Creek North?
- Where do you hang out and what do you like to do?
- Are there enough things to do?
- What would you add to the neighbourhood?
- What is your vision of an ideal neighbourhood for youth?

Appendices for Chapter 5 - Week with a Camera Exercise

Appendix A	A Week with a Camera - Camera Kit for Participants
Appendix B	A Week with a Camera - Certificate of Appreciation for Participants

Your Name: _____

Week with a Camera Instructions

1. **SELECT PLACES:** Select places that are important to you within your neighbourhood. Look at the attached sheet with all the questions to help you think of places that might be important to you.
2. **TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS:** Take a photograph (or more than one) of each of those places (up to 27 photographs in total). Do not take pictures of places or things that might be unsafe. If you are unsure, ask your parents about what you can take pictures of. BUT remember that you take pictures of what is important to YOU - YOUR opinion is what we're looking for! (not your parents')
3. **NOTE DETAILS:** Note the number and any relevant details of each photograph on the attached LOG SHEET. Make sure you explain why it is important to you.
4. **Show on the map** provided where each photograph was taken (roughly).
5. **RETURN CAMERA:** Return the camera and the attached sheets on **Monday, November 26** to your teacher, Mr. Duncan Co.
6. **ANY PROBLEMS?** If you have any problems with this, your camera breaks, etc., please call (or have your parent call) Nancy Hofer at 778 239 8733.

Your Name: _____

Photo LOG SHEETS (don't forget to fill these out when taking your photos :)

Photo No.	<i>This shows ...</i>	<i>It's important to me because...</i>
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		

Your Name: _____

Photo No.	<i>This shows ...</i>	<i>It's important to me because...</i>
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
21		

Your Name: _____

Photo No.	<i>This shows ...</i>	<i>It's important to me because...</i>
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		
27		

Notes:

- Don't forget to hand in your camera, your LOG SHEETS and your map to your teacher on **Monday, November 26**.
- It is very important that you return your camera and sheets by this day because Nancy and James (the University students who gave you the cameras) will be taking the pictures to be developed.
- Then, **on Friday, November 30, Nancy, James and some other University planning students will return to your class to conduct an exercise with the whole class using your photos!** Your photos will be returned to you and you will make a collage of things in your neighbourhood that are important to you, that you like or don't like.
- After the exercise on Friday, Nancy and James will take the collages to be laminated. We will then return them to your teacher who will give them to you to keep!
- **We are so glad that you are helping us with this important study and we can't wait to hear what YOU have to tell us about living in YOUR neighbourhood! :)**

PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Things to think about...

Really special places you go in the neighbourhood

Places you don't like in the neighbourhood

Quiet places you like to go in the neighbourhood

Places you go with your parents

Places you find beautiful

Places you play in the neighbourhood

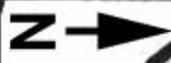
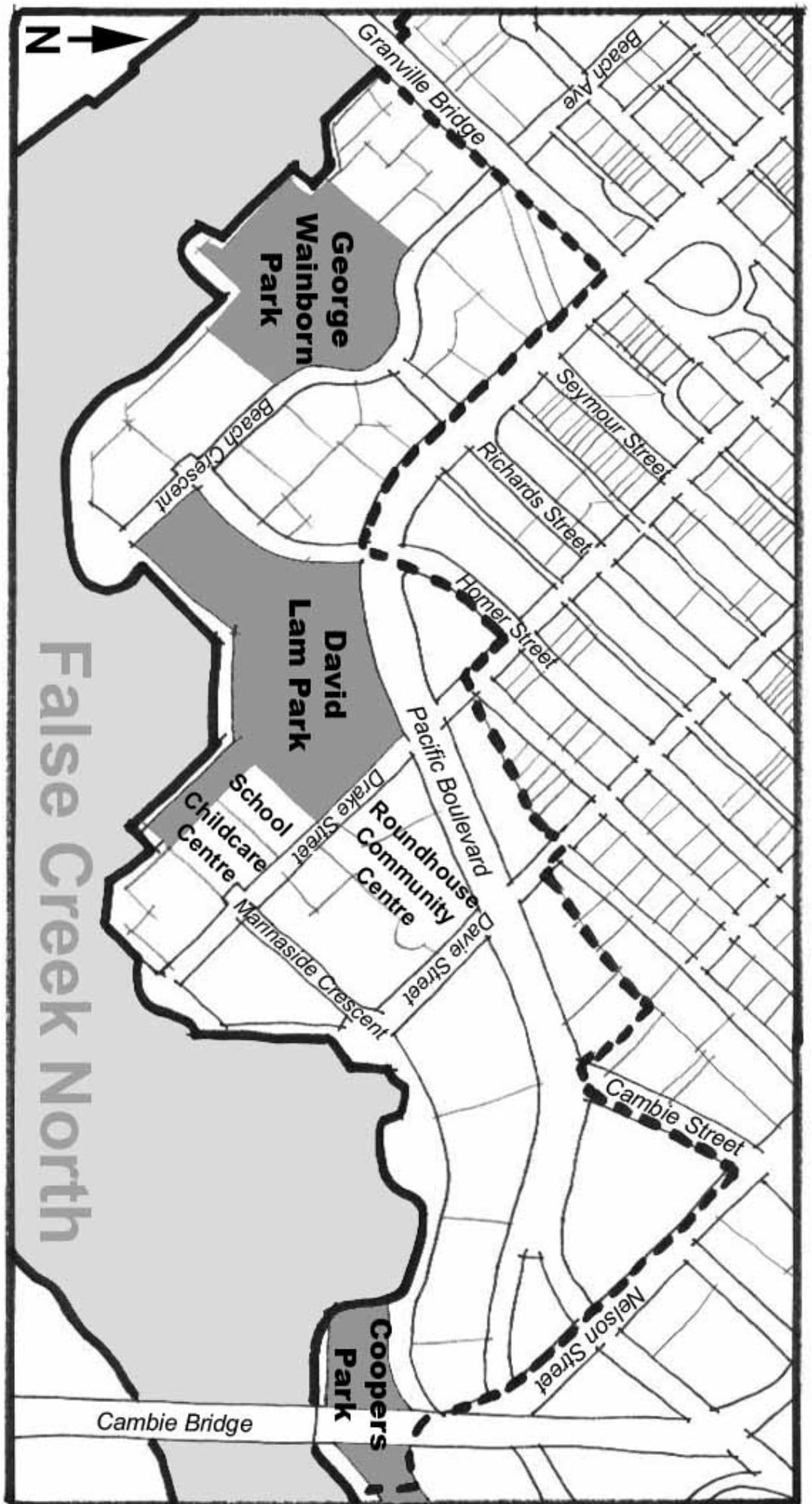
Your favourite place

Places you go with people your own age

Places you used to go when you were younger

Places you go where there are people of all ages

Places you find ugly



False Creek North

George Wainborn Park

David Lam Park

Coopers Park

School
Childcare Centre

Roundhouse Community Centre

Granville Bridge

Beach Ave

Seymour Street

Richards Street

Homer Street

Pacific Boulevard

Drake Street

Davie Street

Cambie Street

Nelson Street

Cambie Bridge



This **Certificate of Appreciation** is presented to

in the Grade 5 class at Elsie Roy Elementary School
on behalf of the School of Community and Regional Planning
PLAN 548C
False Creek North Post-Occupancy Evaluation Course
30 November 2007

*We greatly appreciate your efforts in helping us with our study of resident satisfaction
in the community of False Creek North.*

*Your opinions are valuable and your input will make a valuable contribution
to the planning and development of liveable communities now and into the future.*

Thank you.

Dr Wendy Sarkissian FPIA
Adjunct Professor



Larry Beasley CM
Distinguished Practice Professor

Appendices for Chapter 5 - In-depth Interview Method

Appendix A - Interview Guide
Appendix B - Consent Form

Hello _____, and thank you again for participating in our False Creek North survey on resident satisfaction. Your input is extremely valuable and we appreciate the time that you have taken out of your schedule to meet with us.

As discussed in my email to you, we will be tape-recording the session. These audio records will be transcribed by either myself or one other student who is also conducting interviews. No one else will listen to the tapes. The transcribed interviews will be identifiable only by code, your name or any other attributes will not be used to link your responses to you.

I am going to now give you the consent form which highlights the following points:

- Professor's name and contact info
- Nancy's name and contact info should they have any further questions
- Purpose, which is to determine if this development acts as a good guide to informing future developments
- Coding, as already discussed

(go through it with them briefly)

If you agree to these conditions, please sign the bottom there. You may keep one copy for your record and leave one here for ours.

And now we can begin.

FCN is defined by the following boundaries: *(show on map and get them to mark their building – don't have to name it yet though, that comes later)*

I'm going to ask you questions around the following topics:

- your decision to move here
- your unit or apartment
- your apartment or condo building
- your movement around False Creek North and your use of the public realm
- your general sense of community in the area
- your perception of sustainability and how False Creek North is meeting these objectives

If you are also a person with children under 19 years of age living still at home and/or someone who lives in social/coop housing, I will also ask you questions in those areas.

Although we will be asking about the same topic areas as in the questionnaire, the questions are for the most part different and are meant to help us understand what you are saying at a deeper level and give us a greater understanding of your experience in living in False Creek North.

There are quite a few questions. Close to 100 in all, but the interview will not take longer than 90 minutes. Actually, we can't go longer than that because we will have someone coming in shortly after you. To keep time, could I ask that you try to answer the question as focused as you can? If you feel that you would like to expand on any of the questions because it is important to answering the question,

please do. Ultimately it is more important that we document your experience rather than stick rigidly to our interview guide. But we need to be careful because if we wander very far from the interview guide, the harder it will be to compare answers with other interviews. I just want us to bear that in mind.

Participant code: _____

So, I will now begin with questions around:

Your Background and Household Characteristics

Questions to set comparisons between current dwelling and previous:

1. Where did you live before here? You may name more than just the previous place that you resided in.
2. What kind of units were they?
 - a. Physical attributes (*likely responses: multi-family unit or single family detached*)
 - b. Tenure (*Market or social housing / renting or purchased*)
3. *Ask only if they did not mention that they lived in an apartment previously:* Have you lived in a multi-family building before in your life? *If yes:*
 - a. When?
4. Off the top of your head what are some words you would use to describe your *previous* place of residence?

Demographic questions to characterize respondent:

5. Do you live in an apartment/condo or a townhouse? *If apartment/condo:*
 - a. What floor do you live on?
6. Do you rent or own? *If rent:*
 - a. Do you live in social or co-op housing?
7. What is your current marital status?
8. How many people were in your household when you moved here?
9. How many are in your household now?

10. How would you describe your line of work if you do work?

11. Are you any of the following: (*ask only those that aren't obvious*):

- a. a senior on limited income,
- b. a small business owner of a business located in False Creek North,
- c. part of a visible minority,
- d. differently abled or a person with a disability,
- e. a student from another country,
- f. a dog owner.

Now I am going to ask you some questions about your unit...

Unit

General characteristics/impressions of the unit:

12. How many bedrooms do you have?

13. How many bathrooms do you have?

14. Is your balcony enclosed?

15. What would you say are your unit's strengths?

16. What would you say are your unit's weaknesses?

17. What role did the unit itself play in your decision to live here?

18. *If you mentioned in your questionnaire that you are planning to move from here*, what role does the unit itself play in your decision to move from here?

I am now going to ask you some questions about specific features in your unit:

19. How do you feel about the following features:

- a. Your satisfaction with your balcony.
- b. Your satisfaction with your floor plan/layout.
- c. Is noise an issue in your unit? I'm thinking both noise from other activities **within** your unit and noise **from other units or from outside**. So,
 - i. On a scale of 1 – 5 with 1 being not noisy at all and 5 being very noisy, how would you rate the noise level **within** your unit?

- ii. Using this same scale, how would you rate the noise level **from other units or from outside?**
 - d. Is visual intrusion from other units or the public an issue for you in your unit?
 - e. How do you feel about the amount of sunlight in your unit?
 - f. Do you have floor-to-ceiling windows in your unit? *If yes:*
 - i. Are there some rooms that you think floor to ceiling windows are more appropriate than others?
 - 1. Why or why not?
20. *If you mentioned that you have more than one bathroom:*
- a. If you were given the option to have a second bathroom or to use the space for other purposes, would you choose the second bathroom? Bear in mind that the overall unit size would be the same.
21. Do you find the space in your unit to be flexible? (by flexible we mean: being able to modify it to make it personal, arranging furniture, using the same space for different purposes depending on the activity or time in life).
- a. And how do you feel about that?
22. Knowing what you know about living in your unit now, if you could go back to the time of the purchase would you be willing to pay \$75 000 more to have 100 more square feet?
23. Does your unit meet your (and your family's if applicable) changing needs over time? *If they do not elaborate, ask: What are those changing needs?*
24. When you are in your unit are you consciously aware that you live in high-density multi-family buildings?
- a. How does this make you feel?
25. Do you generally have your blinds drawn even when you are at home:
- a. during the day?
 - b. how about at night?
 - c. *If yes to either:*
 - i. Why is this?

26. Do you find yourself looking out of your windows often observing the goings on of the neighbourhood? *If yes:*
- a. What do you like about that?
27. Is there anything else you would like to share about the satisfaction of your unit before we go on to discuss your building?

Building and Private Lands on which the Building is Situated

28. What building do you live in? (*looking for: do they give name or address?*)

I'm going to ask first about the amenities in your building:

29. What amenities are included in your building? (*If they don't mention these, ask about: roof top garden with pond, pool, hot tub, sauna, gym, billiard room, theatre room, business rooms, meeting rooms, large room with catering facilities for special events*)
- a. Which do you use?
 - b. Very often?
 - c. Why do you use some and not the others?
30. Do you think that these amenities could be improved to encourage your use? *If yes:*
- a. How?
31. Do you think the amenities in your building promote neighbourly interaction? By this I mean, do they provide for enjoyable settings in which to meet people from your building?
- a. And how do you feel about that?
 - b. Would you appreciate it if more of an effort was made to encourage people of the same building to socialize in the amenity rooms?

Questions around neighbourhood interaction:

32. How many people in your **building** do you stop and **chat with**? An approximate number is fine.
- a. Are most of these people from the same floor as you?
 - b. Where do you generally chat with these people?
33. How many people's names do you know on your **floor**?

34. How many people's names do you know in your **building**?
35. Do you **visit** any homes/units **in your building**?
- Are most of these people from the same floor as you?
 - How did you meet these people?
36. Would you say that your building provides for a good sense of neighbourliness and community?
- And how do you feel about that?
37. What, if anything, do you think **promotes** a sense of community at the building scale?
38. What, if anything, do you think **prevents** a sense of community at the building scale?

Now I'm going to ask a couple questions around Parking and Safety in the building:

39. Do you have a FOB system in your building? *If yes:*
- What do you like or dislike about this feature?
40. Do you have secured parking in the building? *If no, skip to 41. If yes:*
- How many parking stalls do you have?
 - Are you permitted to use your parking spot(s) for either parking the car or for storage?
 - If yes:* What do you use it for?
 - If no:* Would you like to have this option?
 - The following question applies only to those who own their unit:* At the time of your purchase, did you have the option of not having a secured parking spot (or only having one) at a savings to your purchase? *If no:*
 - Would you have liked this option at a savings of \$40 000/stall?
41. How is visitor parking addressed in your building?
- And how do you feel about how it is handled?
42. Do you feel safe in the parkade of your building? *If no:*
- Why not?

43. Do you ever worry about the safety of your vehicle when its parked in the parkade? *If yes:*

a. Why?

Now I'm going to ask some questions around the Private and Semi-private open spaces of the building:

44. Does your unit provide for any private open space? *If yes:*

a. How would you describe it?

b. How do you use it?

45. Does your building provide for any communal semi-private space? This is the space that belongs to a group of units. *If yes:*

a. How would you describe it?

b. What kinds of activities do you think the common outdoor areas are **well suited for**?

46. Do you use the semi-private spaces around your building?

a. *If yes:* What do you use it for?

b. *If no:* Why don't you use it?

47. Are there any activities that you would like to do in this space but feel that the space is not well suited for it?

48. Could anything be changed to encourage you to use the space more? (probes: more plants, less concrete feeling, more places to sit alone, more places to sit in a group, more places to have chance encounters, more privacy from residents in the building, more privacy from the public).

49. *This question only applies to people who have **ground-oriented** semi-public open space:*
Is the separation between the semi-private and public open spaces obvious in your eyes?

a. Would you say it is obvious in the eyes of the general public?

b. *If **no** to either of these questions, ask:* Do you think this perceived lack of separation has anything to do with why you don't use this space?

50. What overall do you particularly **like** about your building?

51. What overall do you particularly **dislike** about your building?

52. Did the building itself play any role in your decision to live here?

53. *If you mentioned in your questionnaire that you are planning to move from here, does the building itself play any role in your decision to move from here?*
54. Is there anything else you would like to share about the satisfaction of your building before we go on to discuss getting around and your use of the outdoor areas of FCN?

Getting Around and Use of Outdoor Public Spaces

To begin, I'm going to ask you a couple specific questions about the public spaces:

55. How do you like the Fountains in some of the parks, such as in the George Wainborn park - They are quite an expensive feature, do you think the money could be better spent on other things in the parks?
56. Assuming that FCN still contained the same amount of public open space, would you prefer fewer larger areas, as it is now, or more smaller areas?
- a. And why is that?
57. How do you feel about the general look or aesthetic of the neighbourhood, including the public open spaces?

Now I'd like to ask you about Activities and Programming:

58. What activities do you do in the parks?
- a. Which parks do you do these activities in?
- b. Why might you use certain parks over others?
- c. In general, how do you think the current parks provide for these activities?
59. Are there certain activities that you would like to do that are not accommodated at all or are even prohibited? *If yes:*
- a. Which ones?

Moving on to discuss Safety in the public realm:

60. Are there any places in FCN that you feel particularly unsafe **when you are alone**? *If no, skip to 61. If yes:*

- i. Which ones
- ii. When (day of the week and time of day)
- iii. and why?

b. Are there any places in FCN that you feel particularly unsafe **when you are with another person or persons**? *If yes:*

- i. Which ones
- ii. When (day of the week and time of day)
- iii. and why?

61. What in your opinion **adds to** the safety of FCN in the public realm?

62. What in your opinion **detracts from** the safety in FCN in the public realm?

Now I'd like to discuss how you Get Around FCN:

63. You mentioned in the questionnaire that you filled out that you use _____ (Q19) as the most frequently used mode of transport to get around **within** FCN. Is this still the case?

If they mentioned car as the primary mode of transport within FCN, ask:

a. Would you like to use your car less for trips made within FCN but feel that there are barriers to you using your car less? *If yes:*

- i. What are those barriers?

64. What is your primary mode of transportation to areas **outside** of FCN? *If they mention car, ask:*

a. Would you like to use your car less for trips made within FCN but feel that there are barriers to you using your car less? *If yes:*

- i. What are those barriers?

65. It was the intent of the planners, designers and developers of the neighbourhood that people in FCN would not have to own a car because everything would be close by. Do you find this to be a realistic expectation?

a. Why or why not?

b. Do you think this will change in the future with rising fuel costs?

General/Conclusion to Section

66. Overall, what do you particularly like about the outdoor spaces of FCN?
67. And what do you particularly dislike, if anything?
68. Did the outdoor spaces themselves play any role in your decision to live here?
69. *If you mentioned in your questionnaire that you are planning to move from here*, what role do the outdoor spaces themselves play in your decision to move from here?
70. Is there anything else you would like to share about the satisfaction with getting around and the outdoor spaces of FCN before we go on to discuss more general impressions of your community?

Sense of Community

71. Do you feel that there is a sense of community in FCN?
 - a. How would you describe it?
 - b. And how does that make you feel?
72. What place(s) would you say act as community foci?
 - a. Would you like to see more places where the community could get together? *If yes:*
 - i. What kinds of places do you have in mind?
73. Would you say there is a good range of social, economic, ethnic-mix and range of ages in your community, or does it feel more homogenous?
 - a. Which do you prefer?
74. Would you say FCN is more or less friendly than some of the other places that you've lived?
 - a. And what makes you say that?
75. Do you find it harder to meet people in FCN than in other communities you've lived in?
 - a. *Depending on their answer:* Why do you think it may be more difficult/ easier here?
76. How many people in FCN area do you chat with? This can include people who also provide services, etc. such as the grocer, mail man, etc.
 - a. Where do you generally chat with these people?

77. Do you visit any homes outside of your building, but in the FCN area do you visit? *If yes:*
- a. How many?
 - b. Where did you meet these people?
78. Would you feel comfortable asking any of your close neighbours (this includes people in your building or in the buildings nearby) to watch your place to protect it if you were away?
79. Did the sense of community (or lack of) itself play any role in your decision to live here?
80. *If you mentioned that you were planning to move from here*, what role does the sense of community (or lack of) play in your decision to move from here?
81. Is there anything else you would like to share about the satisfaction of your community before we go on to discuss sustainability in the context of FCN?

Sustainability

Now I would like to shift the discussion to the topic of sustainability and the environment and how “environmentally friendly” you perceive your neighbourhood to be. We are interested in this because the environment is becoming an increasingly important topic. How we plan our cities so that they are more “environmentally friendly” is a big challenge. So we would like to hear from you how important this is to you.

But first, I would like to ask you:

82. What does sustainability mean to you? As with all the other questions, there is no right or wrong answer to this question.
83. How important to you is it that your **lifestyle** be sustainable? Very important, somewhat important, neither important nor unimportant, unimportant, very unimportant.
84. How important is it to you that your **community** be sustainable? Very important, somewhat important, neither important nor unimportant, unimportant, very unimportant.
85. Do you think that FCN is a sustainable community?
- a. Why or why not?

Now I would like to propose a scenario to you. Climate change, peak oil and food security are increasingly being recognized by the public as real and serious threats to our current way of life. Sea levels will likely rise over time, a dwindling supply of oil will likely affect transportation of goods and people as fuel becomes more expensive; the option of shipping in

food from afar will likely also become more expensive. Some believe that we will need to turn to our cities to grow some of our food if this happens.

First of all, I would like to know from you:

86. How real do you perceive these challenges to be?
87. And how well do you think FCN as a place to live and as a community will be able to meet some of these challenges?
88. What additional facilities, if any, would you like to see in your community (including in your building and unit) that could help you to be more environmentally friendly?
89. If this development was still in the conceptual and planning stages, how do you think it could be planned to be more sustainable/ offer more sustainable options?
90. Are there recycling facilities in your building? *If yes:*
 - i. On a scale of 1 – 5, how often do you use them, with 1 being never and 5 being always.
91. If you had a compost similar to a recycling service, where you sort organic waste from other garbage and deposit it in the appropriate receptacle in your building, on a scale of 1 – 5, how often how likely would you use it?
 - a. 1 being never and 5 being always. *If 1 or 2:*
 - b. Why do you think you wouldn't use it often?
92. How effective has the design of your unit been at minimizing the need for heating and cooling systems?
 - a. And how important is this to you? Very important, somewhat important, neither important nor unimportant, unimportant, very unimportant.
93. Do you find that heating and/or cooling systems in your building are energy efficient?
 - a. And how important is this to you? Very important, somewhat important, neither important nor unimportant, unimportant, very unimportant.
94. If you were looking for a home to rent or buy today, how important would it be that it offer "green features" like recycling and composting facilities, energy efficient appliances, passive design, native species planted in the landscape, etc.? Very important, somewhat important, neither important nor unimportant, unimportant, very unimportant.

***Special questions for:**

Families

95. How many children do you have living here at home with you?
96. What are their ages and sexes?
97. How long have they lived here?
98. *If school age or under:* are they enrolled in school/daycare in the FCN area? *If not:*
 - a. Where do they go to school or daycare?
99. What would you say are the benefits or strengths of raising your family in FCN?
100. What would you say are the challenges or weaknesses of raising a family in FCN?

Children's activities

101. What do your children spend much of their free time doing?
102. Where do they do these activities?
103. How well does your home provide for play activities in your **unit**?
 - a. Where do they most frequently play in your **unit**?
 - b. Do you have any safety concerns about your child/children playing in your **unit**?
104. How well does your home provide for play activities in your **building**? (this can include semi-private and communal outdoor areas that are part of the building)
 - a. Where do they most frequently play in the **building**, if at all?
 - b. Are you able to easily supervise your children while they play in the building?
 - c. Do you have any safety concerns about your child/children playing in your **building**?
105. How well does your neighbourhood provide for play activities in **the public realm**?

- a. Where do they most frequently play in the **public realm**, if at all?
 - b. Are you able to easily supervise your children while they play in the public realm?
 - c. Do you have any safety concerns about your child/children playing in **the public realm**?
106. What concerns do you have for your family as your children grow up in FCN?
107. What kinds of activities do you like to do as a family within the boundaries of FCN?
108. What kinds of family-oriented activities would you like to see more of in FCN?
109. Are there any activities that detract from your family's use of the public realm? *If yes:*
- a. What are they?
 - b. Would you prefer that these activities not take place here?
110. Overall, would you say that FCN is a suitable place to raise a family?
- a. Why/ Why not?
111. Did you live in the suburbs before coming here? *If yes:*
- a. How does raising a family here compare to raising a family there?

Special questions for:*Residents in Social or Cooperative Housing**

112. Have you lived in social/coop housing before? *If yes:*
- a. Where?
 - b. How does the social/coop housing here compare to your previous social/coop housing residence?
113. Do you perceive a difference between your **unit** and for-market units? / Does anything about your **unit** make you feel like you live in social/coop housing?
114. Do you perceive a difference between your **building** and for-market buildings? / Does anything about your **building** make you feel like you live in social/coop housing?
115. Do you perceive a stigma from your neighbours in FCN for living in social/coop housing? *If yes:*
- a. How does this make you feel?

Over all satisfaction (for everyone)**Now just a few questions to wrap up our discussion:**

116. Does FCN feel like home?
- a. Why/why not?
 - b. What, if anything, have you done to make it feel more like home?
117. Would you say you like living here better than where you lived in the past?
- a. Why/why not?
118. If you could purchase this place all over again, or if you had the financial means to purchase here, would you?
- a. Why/why not?
119. What, if anything, in addition to the above topics, would you like to discuss with respect to FCN?

Concluding remarks

- thank you
- results will be ready in April, we will send you an email when they are



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CONSENT FORM: Adult Interview Participants

FALSE CREEK NORTH POST-OCCUPANCY EVALUATION: an evaluation of resident satisfaction with False Creek North.

Principal Investigator:

Larry Beasley, Professor at the School of Community and Regional Planning, UBC (604 687 5108)

Co-Investigators:

All graduate planning students enrolled in Post-Occupancy Evaluation of False Creek North course. Nancy Hofer will be coordinating the research programme and can be reached at 778 239 8733.

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact Larry Beasley or Nancy Hofer.

Sponsor:

Funding for this study has been provided by Concord Pacific and Hillside Developments.

Purpose:

False Creek North is currently regarded internationally as a trendsetter in high-density mega-project development amongst politicians, planners and designers; this study provides the opportunity to evaluate how this development meets the needs and is perceived by the people for whom it has been created - the residents. **One of the primary reasons for conducting the Post-Occupancy Evaluation study of this site is to determine if this development acts as a good guide to informing future developments.** Both sponsors of this project, Concord Pacific and Hillside Developments, are interested in using the findings from this evaluation to inform future decisions about their development projects. You are being invited to take part in this research study because you are a resident of False Creek North.

Study Procedures: Interview

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked a series of questions pertaining to your satisfaction with False Creek North. A graduate student researcher will conduct the interview and guide the discussion. The interview will take **no longer than 60 minutes**.

Confidentiality:

Should you choose to participate your identity will be kept **strictly confidential**. Only the graduate students conducting this study and their professors will have access to the data. All documents and data entries will be **identified only by code number** and kept in a locked facility on UBC Vancouver campus. Data on computers will be password protected. **Subjects will not be identified by name** in any reports of the completed study.

Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects:

If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail to RSIL@ors.ubc.ca.

Consent:

Your participation in this study is **entirely voluntary** and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Subject Signature

Date

Participant Code: _____