

New Westminster Neighbourhoods Historical Context Statements

Quayside



McInnes Street Overpass 1982. (NWPL 1144)



New Westminster: Quayside Neighbourhood Historical Context Statement

Historical contexts

Identify and explain the major themes, factors and processes that have influenced the history of a neighbourhood

Their objective is to provide a framework to investigate, identify and manage heritage resources

They are not intended to be a detailed account of all aspects of the history of a neighbourhood

They are not intended to replace histories designed to serve other purposes

Introduction

Neighbourhoods are geographically localized units of identity and cohesion within cities, characterized by the provision of basic services (church, school, park, transportation, shopping) and a sense of community among residents.

Neighbourhoods emerge, decline, disappear, strengthen, and alter their boundaries depending on a range of factors including the changing character of the municipality of which they are a part, population shifts, urban renewal, service availability, and municipal commitment to neighbourhoods' value.

By the turn of the century, New Westminster's neighbourhoods had each acquired a distinctive character. Some attributes reflected the history of the city as a whole, while others were specific to the neighbourhood. Each neighbourhood has gone through challenging times, been revitalized, and today generally possesses an identity and feeling of community among its residents.

New Westminster's neighbourhoods go back in time nearly a century and a half. Their character and physical features, important to understanding their heritage values, have emerged out of this long municipal history. A wider overall context of New Westminster's neighbourhoods is included here as Appendix A.

Historical Contexts and Thematic Frameworks

A historic context statement is a document used in planning for a community's heritage resources. It identifies the broad patterns of historic development in the community and identifies historic property types, such as buildings, sites, structures, objects, landscapes or districts which represent these patterns of development. Documenting the historical context of a place ensures that the significance of its heritage resources are understood and clearly stated.

Historical themes are succinct ways of describing a major force or process which has contributed to the history and development of a neighbourhood. Historical themes form a context of a neighbourhood's history within which the heritage significance of its characteristics and features component parts can be understood, assessed, and compared.



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Historical themes

*Locate a heritage neighbourhood
or resource historically in place
and time*

*Unite a variety of actions, events,
functions, people, place and time*

*Prevent a focus on any one
particular type of resource,
period or event in the history of a
neighbourhood*

*Ensure that a broad range of
heritage resources is considered,
touching on many aspects of the
neighbourhood's history*

*Flow across all peoples, places,
and time periods*

Historical contexts and themes are developed with community engagement and discussions about what residents find valuable about their neighbourhood. These documents support the heritage values of the neighbourhood as identified by the local community.

The historical context statement provides direction for evaluating and protecting significant heritage resources. It can be used to inform the management of the area's heritage. This includes the selection of historic and cultural sites for nomination to the Community Heritage Register. It also includes the ability to sustain the area's rich diversity of intangible cultural heritage, such as stories, festivals, celebrations, arts, sports, and other valued forms of expression and community building.

The context statement is intended to:

- Capture the heritage values of the Brow of the Hill neighbourhood and the evolution of its geographic community over time
- Capture the reader or audience's imagination
- Capture the unique character defining elements of the community and overlaps between one community and elsewhere
- Connect the past to the present
- Connect heritage values to the experience of physical surroundings

As a planning document, the neighbourhood context statement is meant to be a dynamic work, evolving as more information is uncovered and as a community's needs and desires change.

Historical photographs courtesy of the New Westminster Museum and Archives (NWMA) and the New Westminster Public Library (NWPL)

Quayside: Summary of Values

Quayside is a singular as a riverside residential neighbourhood of New Westminster, expressed in the romance of the waterfront in a completely unique community. Value is derived from Quayside's location on the Fraser River, early industrial history, community, and urban development.

Quayside is valued for its connectivity, both to the river and city. The ecology of the place is important, particularly as it supports wildlife that includes eagles nesting on Poplar Island island, seals, geese and herons. The importance of this fragile ecosystem is presented to the public through the Fraser River Discovery Centre.



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Quayside is important as an industrial area that is no longer active and which has been revitalized as a livable waterfront community, but still retains a sense of industry. This is seen in things such as the boat traffic, the working river, and the rich history in such stories as those about the industrial plants and the fishing boats that used to sell salmon, and the physical traces of industrial history, such as the wartime pilings on Poplar Island.

Historically a key transportation hub, Quayside has four railways that have operated for over a century. The place is symbolic of the history of transportation, including ferries K de K and Sampson that travelled and worked the river, the interurban crossing the railway bridge, and the regionally significant construction of the Pattullo Bridge. Today, the neighbourhood continues to be part of a transportation network that includes Skytrain, railways, the river and the McInnes Street overpass that provides a connection to Downtown and the rest of the city

Cultural and social values are found in the association with the Qayqayt First Nation and the wider area's multiculturalism with its attraction to visitors from all over the world. Also important are unique social institutions such as daycare facilities located in high-rises, and in local neighbourhood events such as the Boardwalk Festival.

Many feel the history of the Quay begins with the River Market, originally the Westminster Quay Public Market, that brought people and residential development to the area, and which endured and was revitalized despite competition from larger retail.

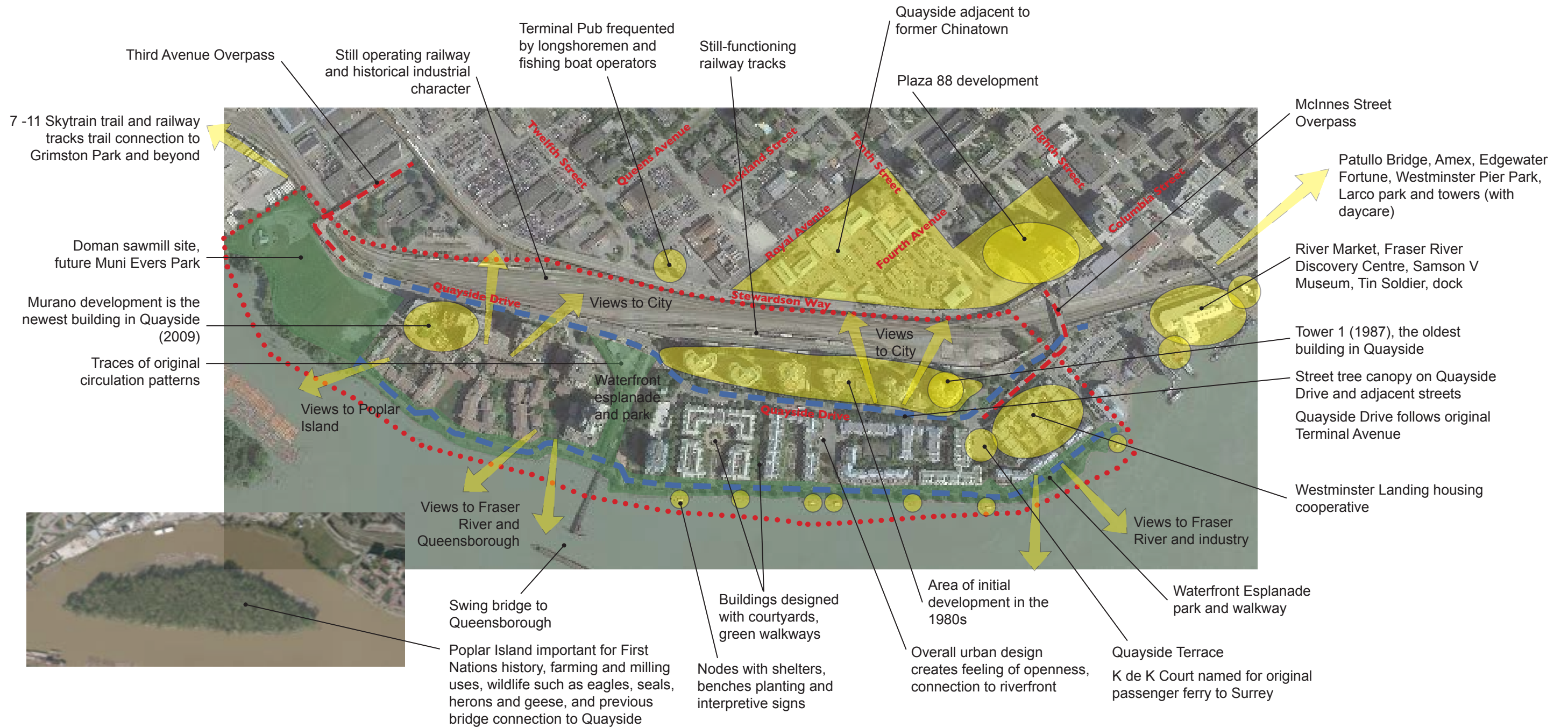
Quayside is important for its aesthetic qualities, which include intrinsic values seen in the views to the river and to downtown as well as elements of design, such as gardens, the canopies of street trees, and hanging baskets.

Recreational amenities are highly valued, including Quayside Park, the submarine park and the well-maintained boardwalk which functions as a city park and open space. Pedestrian connections such as the trail below the Skytrain, the pedestrian bridge connecting the West End, and potential new connections to Queensborough are important elements of the community.



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Features of Quayside

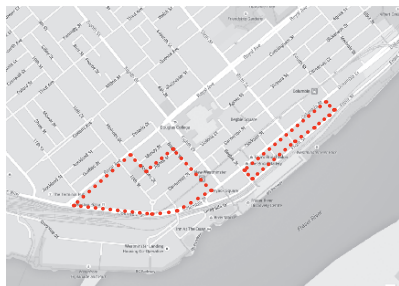




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Royal Engineers 1862 map showing original survey of Quayside (Hayes 2014).



Approximate areas of New Westminster's Chinatowns, the first on Front Street and the second and re-built third Chinatowns in the 'swamp' area adjacent to present-day Quayside.



View of Royal City Planing Mills (Quayside) from Agnes and Eighth Streets, 1888. (NWMA IHP1118)

Quayside historical background

Chronology

- 1860 The Royal Engineers survey Quayside as part of the waterfront and downtown areas, superimposing a grid pattern parallel to the Fraser River on the natural topography, with streets running up the hill and avenues across it.
- 1860 The incorporation of New Westminster as a municipality includes the area below Royal Avenue, now Downtown.
- 1870s Canneries, lumber mills, metal fabricating plants, shipping terminals and other industries are emerging along the riverfront.
- 1878 The Canadian Pacific Railway's terminus at Port Moody is announced.
- 1881 Construction of the CPR begins and railway workers begin to pass through New Westminster.
- 1880s Columbia Street emerges as New Westminster's Chinatown, which expands to include an area adjacent to Quayside.
- 1883 The Canadian Pacific Navigation Company is established
The K de K ferry service to Surrey begins.
- 1887-92 The CPR branch-line arrives contributing to the prosperity of Downtown. Columbia Street between Fourth and Eighth Streets assumes its present appearance.
- 1893 The Interurban Railway is constructed along 12th Street.
- 1913 Harbour improvements are completed to create a deep sea port.
- 1914-19 The industrialization of the Fraser River during the World War I attracts workers to the area, expanding the industrial economy of the riverfront and spurring the construction of workers' housing.
- 1928 Pacific Coast Terminals Co. Ltd. is incorporated. The company enlarges existing port facilities and erects a storage plant at the foot of 10th Street.
- 1930s Increased prosperity results in new construction and infill.
- 1937 The Samson V is launched, the fifth and final federal vessel built to remove logs and other debris from the shipping channel of the Fraser River.



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- 1944 The Pattullo Bridge opens connecting New Westminister and Surrey connecting to the primary route south to the US border.
Local 502 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) is chartered.
- 1965 Stewardson Way opens.
- 1973 The Royal Westminister Regimental Historical Museum opens in the 1896 Armoury building.
- 1979 The waterfront lands, including Quayside, are sold.
- 1981 Pacific Coast Terminals moves its operations to Port Moody.
- 1984 The City acquires the 1937 Samson V sternwheeler and establishes it as a floating museum.
- 1985 Premier Bill Bennett undertakes sod-turning to mark the first phase of the Waterfront Quay redevelopment program.
Westminister Quay housing, commercial and open space projects are underway.
SkyTrain service commences from Vancouver to downtown New Westminister.
- 1986 The Westminister Quay Public Market opens.
Plaza 88 development with a shopping centre and three condominium towers is completed.
The Alex Fraser Bridge opens, connecting New Westminister to Surrey.
- 1987 The McInnes Street Overpass opens.
- 1990 Skybridge opens as a Skytrain crossing over the Fraser River, connecting downtown New Westminister to Surrey.
- 1999 The Royal City Star destination riverboat casino arrives at the waterfront. Construction begins on the Fraser River Discovery Centre as part of the casino building.
Construction of the Skytrain connection to Coquitlam and beyond begins.
- 2016 New Westminister presents its vision to reconnect the Fraser and Brunette Rivers through a continuous waterfront experience.



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McInnes Overpass 2016.



View of first towers from McInnes Overpass 2016.

Beginnings

The Quayside neighbourhood is a new residential and riverfront walkway development located between 10th and 14th Streets on the Fraser River south of Stewardson Way and Columbia Street. The development was part of the City's response to changing community values toward the city's waterfront and to move forward with implementing the City's waterfront vision.



Artist's rendition of the new developments at Quayside and along the downtown riverfront, 1984. (NWMA)

Quayside acknowledges the presence of the Musqueam, Katzie, Qw'ó:ntl'an, Tsleil-Waututh and perhaps most significantly, the Qayqayt (also known as the New Westminster Indian Band), one of the smallest aboriginal groups in Canada, and the only one without a land base. One of three former Qayqayt reserves was located on a 22-acre piece of land near the current site of Kruger Paper, a second was on Poplar Island. The federal government allocated the reserves to the Qayqayt people in 1859.¹

The more recent history of the Quayside neighbourhood is tied primarily to New Westminster's industries of shipping, transport and lumbering. Quayside was developed on Fraser River foreshore land

¹ Urban Systems. *Reclaiming Roots: Unearthing the lost history of Qayqayt First Nation*. 2014.



New Westminister: Quayside Neighbourhood Historical Context Statement



Longshoring at Pacific Coast
Terminals c.1938. (NWMA IHP1653)



Terminal Avenue 1957.
(NWMA IHP10141-002)

that in the 1890s, housed the Royal City Planing Mills, warehouses, manufacturing plants and other industries related to the riverfront. After a 1913 fire, the land sat more or less empty until its purchase in 1927 by Pacific Coast Terminals.

In 1893, the BCER Interurban line constructed along 12th Street created a direct link to the Quayside area. Old Columbia Street and the appropriately named Terminal Avenue (now Quayside Drive) were the original streets, the patterns of which can still be seen in the neighbourhood. River transport included first commercial vessel to regularly connect New Westminister and Surrey, the K de K ferry, made its first trip 132 years ago, on March 15, 1884, while the Samson V pulled logs that drifted down the Fraser during spring thaws from the sand on the banks to protect fishboats or tugs.

Pacific Coast Terminals had its beginnings in 1924 as the Fraser River Dock and Stevedoring Company, evolving over time to become one of the largest businesses on the riverfront and extending from today's Westminister Quay Public Market west to the Scott Paper (now Kruger) site. With the support of the City of New Westminister, an application was made to the Dominion Government to enlarge port facilities and construct a storage plant at the foot of 10th Street. The investment included the construction of shipping terminals, cold storage plant and modern mechanical cranes and other machinery connected by road, rail and wharf. The development transformed the city's waterfront, creating the first-class international shipping terminal envisioned by New Westminister's Board of Trade.²

The port hosted ships from places such as Yokohama, Hamburg and Liverpool, and the terminals had the capacity to handle the import and export of general cargo such as lumber, wood pulp, flour, grain, fertilizer, zinc and lead, apples, refrigerated food and many other commodities.

The opening of the Pacific Coast Terminals was indicative of the importance of the facility, one of the country's largest seaports at the time, to the city of New Westminister. Pageantry, fireworks, May Queen, costumed canoe paddlers representing Simon Fraser, and First Nations dancers were part of the grand opening ceremony.³

² Jim Wolf. *Royal City, A Photographic History of New Westminister*. 2005.

³ *ibid.*



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Part of Quayside showing Pacific Coast Terminals, 1946. The railway bridge to Queensborough is on the left. (Vintage Air Photos)

A key part of the PCT operations were the longshoremen, International Longshoremen Warehousemen Union (ILWU) local 502. Longshoring was a world unto itself, often involving three or four generations of the same family. It was felt that the longshore industry was critical to New Westminster's prosperity from the 1950s until the 1970s, and see the waterfront was an important part of New Westminster's economy. The lunchtime ritual for longshoremen to go to beer parlours during their lunch hour kept these downtown institutions in business.⁴

Over time, there were changes and de-industrialization in the longshoring profession that occurred between the work on early cargo ships after World War II to containerization in the 1970s. The use of the New Westminster docks declined from the late 1970s onward, in part because they had been built for general cargo. With the advent of bulk loading and container ships, they became too narrow and there was no room for expansion. It lost its staple commodities to other ports, both domestic and foreign. The loss of the longshoremen and the colourful, vital part of the city's fabric was regretted by some at the time.⁵

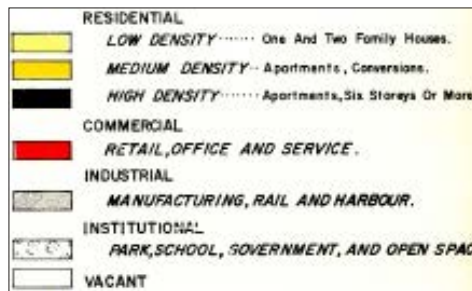
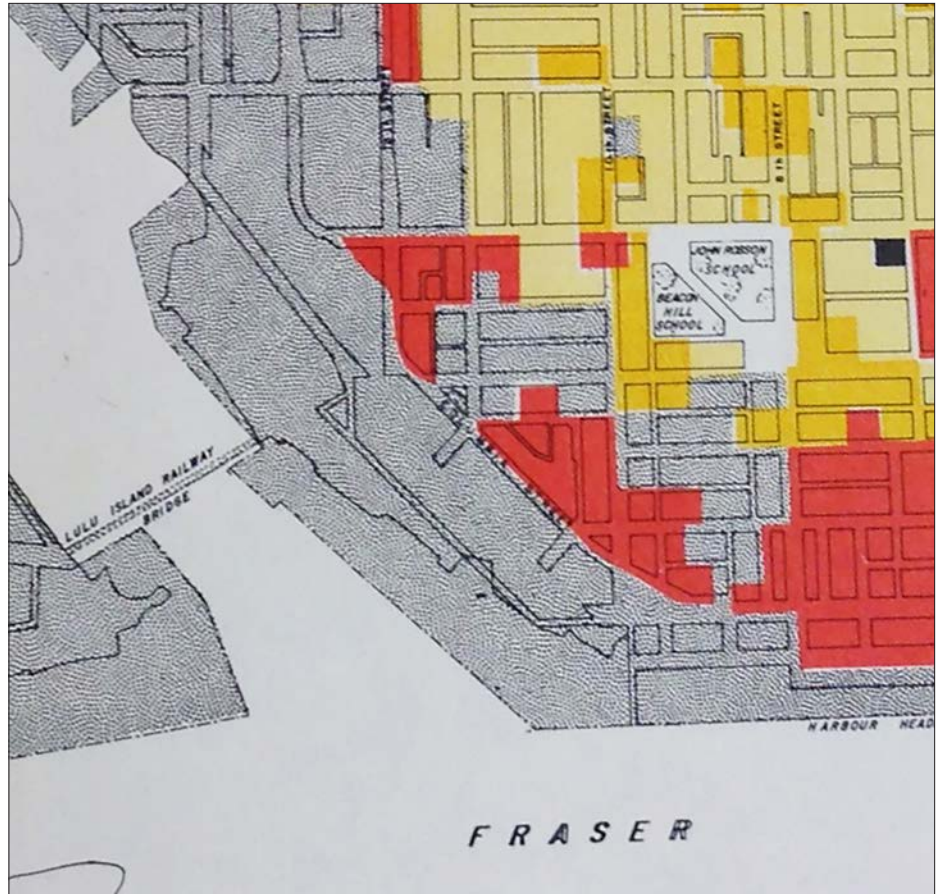
The waterfront was sold in 1979, to become a showpiece of New Westminster's redevelopment. In 1981, Pacific Coast Terminals moved its operations to Port Moody. The Doman lands, site of a sawmill that lasted until the 1970s and now slated as the site of Muni Evers Park, is the last piece of undeveloped industrial land in Quayside.

4 Oral history interview with Lorne Briggs, retired ILWU local 502 longshoreman, May 31, 2013.

5 "Royal City soon to sink out of sight as historic deep sea port." New Westminster Record. No date.



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Quayside land uses in 1960 are industrial with adjacent commercial uses. (*Urban Renewal Study Part 3*)



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Mayor Muni Evers with waterfront plans, 1979.
(NWMA IHP1-842)



Revitalization

A study undertaken by the city's Planning Department in 1965 divided the city into nineteen areas for urban renewal consideration. For Quayside, then known as Market, the study noted that the area contained some of the poorest quality and most overcrowded housing in the city, while a number of vacant industrial and commercial facilities mar the appearance of this gateway to the downtown area.

In a precursor to the revitalization of the area that would begin in the 1980s, the study noted that many of these problems could be eliminated through the planned redevelopment of the area, including the completion of a connection between 12th Street and Royal Avenue.

The 1993 Heritage Management Plan focused primarily on New Westminster's Downtown, but the following general comments are of value when considering Quayside:

- There is a need to identify and prioritize which heritage resources are significant
- Heritage resources are for the common good of the community
- Heritage conservation has an important role to play in maintaining community pride and creating livable neighbourhoods
- The preservation of parks and green space is a priority

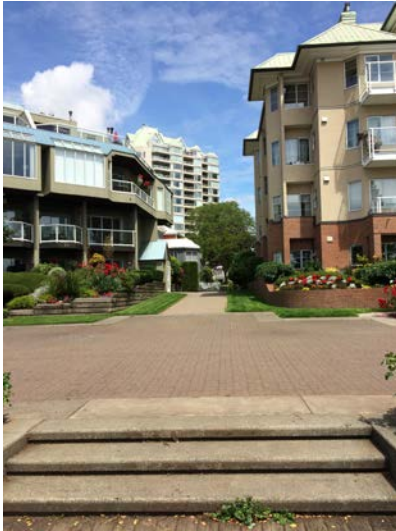
The wider vision for New Westminster Quay neighbourhoods is particularly exhibited by Quayside. Access to the waterfront, greenbelts, pedestrian-only areas, nearby amenities and buildings stepped back from the river with a maritime design were some of the aspects of the vision for the place. Marketing materials emphasized access to Skytrain, riverfront views and leisure time choices.

By 1982, the McInnes Overpass construction was underway by the First Capital City Development Company. The overpass spans Columbia Street, three railway tracks, and a service road providing needed public access to Quayside. Construction jobs were welcomed as the earlier port economy declined. Skytrain arrived, and Westminster Quay Public Market opened, both in time for Expo 86. Over time the market was overtaken by big box stores. It was re-imagined and revitalized as River Market in 2008.

Today, Quayside is a maturing and thriving neighbourhood, with its oldest building, Tower 1 built in 1987, 35 years old. There are



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two housing co-ops, Westminster Landing and Riverbend and the Waterfront Esplanade that follows the riverfront along the length of Quayside, and the future Muni Evers Park on its western edge. Recalling the historic vessel, the K de K Court is named after the earlier passenger ferry to Surrey.

The Quayside neighbourhood continues to evolve. In 2016 New Westminster revealed its vision to reconnect the Fraser and Brunette Rivers through a continuous waterfront experience.

Current perceptions from within the neighbourhood

In order to understand what the community valued or was concerned about in their neighbourhood, a workshop session was held with the Quayside Residents' Association in May 2015. The following questions were used to encourage discussion about neighbourhood value and character:

- What is the heritage of Quayside? Why is it important?
- What are some of the important features of Quayside?
- Why are they important? Where are they located?
- What are some of the big stories or historical themes of the neighbourhood?
- What words best describe your neighbourhood?
- What are your concerns about changes to the neighbourhood?

In the eyes of the community the history of present-day Quayside and the wider Westminster Quay area began with the construction of the Westminster Quay Public Market in 1986, which brought people and residential development to the area. Quayside was described by residents as a riverside residential neighbourhood.

Poplar Island is an important feature to residents, including its ecological importance as habitat for eagles, geese, herons and seals. The island's industrial history included the construction of ships during World War II, and pilings from industrial activity can still be seen on the island. There are concerns that the island is silting up on its north side, and that it is being used as log boom holding spot, both considered part of an ecosystem under threat

A vital part of Quayside is its layers of history, considered important as an industrial area that, while no longer active, still contains traces of that legacy. Four railways continue to operate here, as they have for



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MV Edgewater Fortune.

the last century. Preservation of the working railway is important, even though it is noisy. The Westminster Paper Mill (Scott Paper, Kruger) is felt to be a big part of the community, the last remaining industry on the waterfront to the west of Quayside, which in itself has a rich industrial history important to the neighbourhood.

Residents find the boat traffic and the working river an important part of their neighbourhood, and remember when the fishing boats used to sell salmon. Today, this heritage lives on through companies such as Amix, connected to traditional marine-related activities such as towing, barging, marine salvage and materials loading.

Part of the geography of Quayside is seen in its connectivity, both past and present. Early ferries such as the K de K and the Sampson V once plied the waters of the Fraser River, the BCER interurban used the railway bridge, and the construction of the Pattullo Bridge was an important infrastructure development in the 1950s.

Today, Quayside is seen as a hub for a variety of modes of transportation. New transportation networks include Skytrain, the McInnes Street overpass and urban trails such as the 711 Skytrain trail, the path to Queensborough and the pedestrian bridge connecting the West End to the Quay, while historical ones are still operational, such as the railway and tracks, the river and bridges.

The urban design of Quayside was noted, including specific features and open spaces, such as Waterfront Esplanade Park, River Market as the core of the neighbourhood, the McInnes Street Overpass that provides a connection across the railway tracks to the rest of the city. The design of buildings to have low-rise structures in the front and high-rises to the back is considered appropriate, for livability, the character of open space and to preserve views.

Particular buildings noted include the 35-year-old Tower 1 built in 1987 and the oldest development in Quayside, the Lido (the newest), Quayside Terrace, housing co-operatives as a good form of development, and towers as markers in the community. Innovations in urban living are apparent in the area, such as the location of schools and daycare facilities in high-rise buildings such as the new Larco development.

Distinct and identifiable boundaries of Quayside were mentioned as part of its character: McInnes Street overpass, the Fraser River, Stewardson Way, the railway tracks and Columbia Street. Trees



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planted as part of original 1980s plan provide an incredible canopy, and the overall design has created a neighbourhood of openness. The riverside boardwalk is used as a city park and recreational amenity, maintained in collaboration with the buildings, and with hanging baskets and lovely private gardens along it. Views provide the best of all worlds, to the river and nature, to industry and to the downtown cityscape.

Cultural aspects of Quayside and Westminster Quay are an important part of the community. Noted were the tin soldier, the Fraser River Discovery Centre and Westminster Pier Park. Quayside Park is interesting, with lighthouses and a historic U521 submarine.

The place is very well used at all hours, it is multicultural, and attracts visitors from all over the world. Quayside Festival, Boardwalk Sale, music and food trucks were some of the activities mentioned, while the Simon Fraser University Oral History Project provides photos of the waterfront up to Queensborough bridge and photographs at Westminster Pier Park help to tell the story of the area. The neighbourhood's people were also recalled, including long-time resident Margaret Smith and master mariner Henry Johanson, owner of the boat *Edgewater Fortune*.

Attendees made several suggestions for neighbourhood connections and community understanding, such as the following:

- Making the ferry dock between the Quay and Park Royal operational
- Continuing to create destinations along waterfront
- Preserving the boat docks and the working harbour
- Connecting Quayside to Byrne Creek Park in Burnaby via an existing trail
- Re-creating the historical waterfront connections, such as a connection to Poplar Island with interpretation and raised walkways similar to the historical bridge connection, and a connection to Queensborough
- Developing the Doman lands as the future Muni Evers Park

Some concerns were voiced about aesthetic changes to Quayside, including high-rise construction in Queensborough and the Quay to Queensborough Q2Q pedestrian bridge that could potentially impact views. The River Market should become a proper public market, not a retail mall. The increase in vehicular traffic has due to development and has become a concern due to potential danger



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to pedestrians, as has the need for neighbourhood adaptations to increases in density. Aesthetic concerns include the ivy identification feature at the entry to Quayside that “... doesn’t do us justice,” and maintenance issues such as deteriorating concrete walls and other infrastructure.





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Tugboat approaching Quayside,
1956. (NWMA IHP1890)

Quayside Thematic Framework

Location of early waterfront industry

- Original connection to the rest of the riverfront development, from Sapperton to Poplar Island
- Deep sea port
- Transportation networks
- Manufacturing and support industries

New urban design and development

- No post World War II transformation
- Industrial use until its revitalization in the 1980s
- Transformation to housing and settlement
- Proximity of early Chinatown and Downtown
- The City's waterfront vision

A changing community

- Diversity of workers
- Changing relationships to the waterfront
- Too much change?
- The community today

Neighbourhood Characteristics

Landscape and built characteristics describe the particular physical attributes of a neighbourhood and, combined with identified heritage values, are a concise way of understanding Quayside's significance and character.

Natural Systems and Features

- The Fraser River and foreshore
- Herons and other shore and water birds

Spatial Organization

- Overall planned urban design of Quayside
- Feeling of openness
- Street access to riverfront, courtyards and mews

Land Use

- Originally industrial, today residential and recreation

Cultural Traditions

- Early presence of First Nations
- Local festivals and events such as Quayside Festival, Boardwalk



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View from McInnes overpass, 1987.
(NWMA IHP9563-0654)

Sale, music and food trucks

Circulation

- Major streets follow original industrial pattern
- Areas of pedestrian access only
- Waterfront esplanade walkway
- Overpasses at McInnes Street and Third Avenue

Topography

- Relatively flat foreshore lands

Vegetation

- Trees planted as part of original urban design
- Regenerating foreshore vegetation

Buildings and Structures

- Primarily residential buildings
- Low rises in the front, high in the back

Views and Vistas

- View to Downtown, the Fraser River, Poplar Island and Queensborough and river industries



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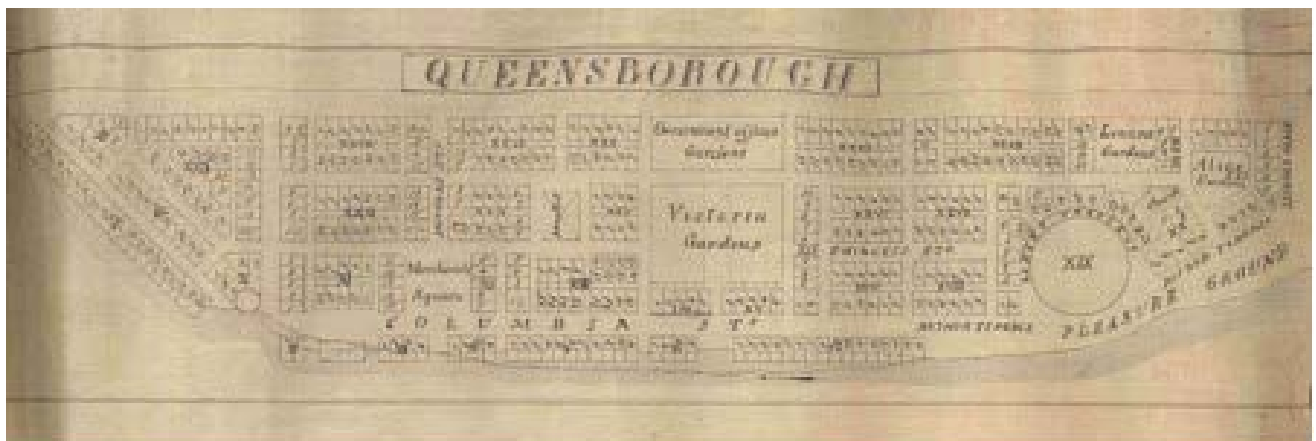
Appendix A

Overall context for New Westminster's neighbourhoods through time

Long before the first settlers made their way to New Westminster during the gold rush that broke out on the Fraser River in 1858, the area to which they came had been home to the Kwantlen people and an important food gathering site.

The influx of thousands of miners caused Great Britain to declare a mainland colony named British Columbia and to dispatch the Columbia Detachment of Royal Engineers to provide protection and construct infrastructure. Headed by Colonel Richard Clement Moody, the Royal Engineers arrived in late 1858.

Moody decided virtually from his first sight of present day New Westminster on January 5, 1859, that it should, for defensive reasons, become the colonial capital, replacing the initial choice of Derby near Fort Langley further up the Fraser River. Water was the principal means of transportation at the time, and the entry to the gold fields needed to be secured from possible attack by the United States just to the south. On February 14, Moody named the site Quayside in honour of Queen Victoria, who shortly thereafter expressed a preference for its being called New Westminster.



Map 1. Royal Engineers' plan for New Westminster

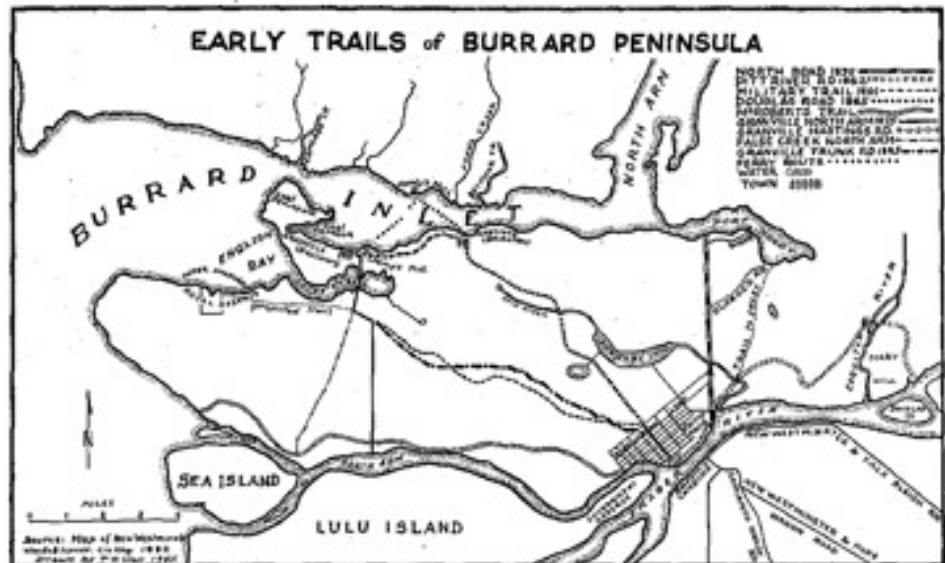
From <http://www.nwpr.bc.ca/parks%20web%20page/pictures/Map%20from%20NWMA%20collection%20web>.



New Westminster: Quayside Neighbourhood Historical Context Statement

New Westminster was from its beginnings a planned city. The Royal Engineers set up camp just to the east at Sapperton, named for the men of the Royal Engineers who were called sappers. From there they laid out roads, squares and public places, land reserves, and parks. Albert Crescent, distinguished by its Fraser River views, was intended to be the fashionable neighbourhood, its residences abutting a circular Victorian-style park named Albert Crescent after Queen Victoria's husband. Before being recalled to Britain in 1863, the Royal Engineers also laid out much of the outlying region that would later be incorporated into New Westminster and cut a trail from the new capital to Burrard Inlet, the present day Kingsway.

On July 17, 1860, New Westminster was incorporated as a city, the first west of Ontario.



Map 2. Early New Westminster within its regional context
From <http://www.royalengineers.ca/earlytrails.gif> from original in BC Historical Quarterly, Oct 1945.



New Westminister: Quayside Neighbourhood Historical Context Statement

New Westminister's good times as a colonial capital and jumping-off point for miners occasioned a number of large residences. The home constructed by Fraser riverboat captain William Irving on Royal Avenue in 1865 would be purchased by the city in 1950 to become part of the New Westminister Museum and Archives. The City established the first public school in 1865 and the Royal Columbian Hospital in 1862. The Sisters of St. Ann founded St. Ann's convent in 1864.

The decline of the gold rush in the mid-1860s caused New Westminister's fortunes to ebb. The earlier colony of Vancouver Island with its capital at Victoria was absorbed into the mainland colony in 1866. To pacify Vancouver Islanders, the joint colony's capital was put at Victoria, denying New Westminister the status on which its ambitious city layout was premised.

The capital remained at Victoria on British Columbia's joining the Canadian Confederation in 1871. With the loss of the capital and its employment, the city's population declined. New Westminister did not entirely lose out however, gaining both a new penitentiary built with federal funds and a provincial hospital for the insane, renamed Woodlands School in 1950. Opened in 1878, the pair were constructed respectively on the site of the former Royal Engineers' camp of Sapperton and on an intended pleasure ground located between Albert Crescent and the Fraser River. In the same year, John Hendry founded Royal City Planing Mills on the New Westminister waterfront.

As a condition of British Columbia entering the Canadian Confederation, the Dominion government committed to building a transcontinental rail line. Once it was known the Canadian Pacific Railway would locate its western terminus on Burrard Inlet, bringing the city of Vancouver into being, New Westminister sought a branch line. To raise the funds needed for a \$70,000 construction bonus to the railway, the city council requested from the provincial government title to the land reserves laid out by the Royal Engineers for parks and squares. Victoria Gardens, St. Patrick's Square, Clinton Place Reserve,



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Merchant's Square, St. George's Square, Alice Gardens, Louisa Gardens and St. Andrew's Square were then subdivided into lots and put up for auction. While the action eroded the planned city put in place by the Royal Engineers, it encouraged new settlement. In anticipation of the arrival of the railway, new investment was made in the City.

The completion of the CPR branch line to New Westminster in August 1886 launched a second major period of growth. The branch line left the main line to Vancouver at the future Port Coquitlam and followed the riverfront Downtown on the south side of Front Street to a station at the corner of Columbia and 8th Street, transforming New Westminster into the metropolis for the agricultural Fraser Valley. Warehouses and manufacturing expanded, especially along the waterfront, not far from where many of the men, brought from China to help build the transcontinental line and then left to their own devices, made their homes.

Hundreds of new homes were built in the six years from 1886 to 1892. New investment in institutional buildings responded to the growth in population. In 1886 the Sisters of Providence opened St. Mary's hospital in the downtown. In 1889, a new Royal Columbian Hospital was built in Sapperton. The Central School was expanded on new schools built in Sapperton and the West End.

A commercial building boom took place, with beautiful three and four storey brick retail and office buildings being put up on Columbia Street. The City took a strong lead in providing infrastructure. A dam was placed across Lake Coquitlam and water supplied to the City and the surrounding municipalities. An electric generating plant was built to supply electricity to the City. Roads were opened and macadamized. In 1892, the City created a city market on the waterfront, a place for farms in surrounding municipalities to buy and sell produce.

New Westminster's boundaries expanded. In 1888-89 the city acquired the suburban blocks laid out by the Royal Engineers, including Sapperton and a former military reserve on the tip of



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Lulu Island, named Quayside. The Westminster Street Railway Company was inaugurated in 1890 to connect the downtown with city neighbourhoods. The next year a line constructed by the British Columbia Electric Railway Company linked New Westminster to rapidly growing Vancouver, whose nearly 14,000 residents were double those of New Westminster. Other lines followed. In 1892 the next door city of Burnaby was incorporated, confirming New Westminster's northern boundary at 10th Avenue.

Investors were spurred to purchase land and entrepreneurs to construct elegant new homes, many of them near the large Queen's Park laid out by the Royal Engineers and now sporting public gardens and an exhibition building. In 1892 provincial legislature incorporated Columbian Methodist College as the province's first post-secondary institution, being opened the next year near Queen's Park. Families of more modest means opted for newer neighborhoods like the West End with its fine views over the Fraser River.

New Westminster's growth, curtailed by a worldwide recession beginning in 1892, was about to renew itself when a fire centering on the downtown destroyed a third of the city on September 10-11, 1898. One estimate has almost half the population left homeless.

Good economic times based in lumbering, fishing, and agriculture facilitated rapid rebuilding. The face of the city altered as many rebuilt further from the downtown, along the new streetcar lines.

While Queen's Park continued to be the favoured residential neighbourhood, the West End, Sapperton, Quayside, and the area around Moody Park, among the locations surveyed by the Royal Engineers, acquired more homes and also commercial and public buildings. New Westminster's population doubled over the first decade of the new century to 13,000 and upwards to 14,000 at the height of the boom.

New Westminster again expanded during the buoyant 1920s before



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being humbled by the Great Depression. Increased industry along the waterfront pushed the remaining upper-class residents in Albert Crescent northward to Queen's Park. In 1929, New Westminster became a major port with the construction of Pacific Coast Terminals. Over 600 new homes, many of them bungalows, were constructed across New Westminster before 1929, when the depression hit. Many vacant houses in good condition that then reverted to the city for non-payment of property taxes, some of them architecturally significant, were torn down. Other large homes were converted to rooming houses.

Newer neighborhoods expanded during the depression years as mostly modest homes went up. The West End grew to some 5,000 residents, resulting in the construction of an elementary school in 1936. Quayside, which shifted from farming to a multi-ethnic residential community, acquired a larger school. Moody Park got playgrounds and sport facilities, including a clubhouse. The city negotiated with the British Columbia Electric Railway Company to provide buses to emerging neighbourhoods, which began running in December 1938. The first was a cross-town bus connecting the West End with downtown, resulting in the corner of 8th Avenue and 12th Street becoming an important junction for shoppers. New Westminster's population grew from 17,500 in 1931 to 22,000 a decade later.

New Westminster thrived during the good times following the Second World War. The City Council hired well known American planner Harland Bartholomew to create a new city plan. Produced in 1945-47, it advocated New Westminster becoming a more urban place through apartment development in the eastern end of the downtown along Royal Avenue and duplex residences west of 6th Street and in Sapperton. The city's commercial centre shifted uptown from Columbia Street to the junction of 6th Street and 6th Avenue after Woodward's department store opened there in 1954 complete with free rooftop parking for 300 cars with space nearby for 450 more vehicles.



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New neighborhoods competed for attention. The subdivision of Victory Heights, located east of Glenbrooke North and honouring by its name those who had served in the Second World War, occupied some of the city's remaining unbuilt land. The nearby Massey Heights subdivision also filled with bungalows. The outlying area of Connaught Heights was amalgamated into New Westminster in 1965.

New Westminster's population expanded from 28,600 in 1951 to almost 43,000 by 1971, before falling back to 38,500 a decade later and then climbing back to 43,500 in 1991, 54,700 by 2001 and 58,500 by 2006. One of the consequences was attention to urban renewal.

Some familiar landmarks disappeared. In 1980 the BC Penitentiary closed and was sold by the federal government in 1985 as part of a massive Downtown revitalization plan. The site was developed in stages for housing but two significant buildings were retained and designated as heritage buildings. A waterfront quay project got underway in 1986, the same year Skytrain service commenced. Woodlands School was closed in phases in 1996-2003, being rezoned for residential development under the name of Victoria Hills. St. Mary's Hospital shut its doors in 2005.

The city's changing face turned affected the neighbourhoods. In 1975 the New Westminster City Council approved a plan to study each of them "in order to maintain or enhance their livability." Reports followed on Glenbrooke North in 1975, Victory Heights in 1978, Downtown in 1978, and Connaught Heights in 1983. The question of what constituted a neighbourhood was considered in 1981 in a discussion paper looking towards a community plan: "The neighbourhood should be considered as the minimum planning unit in all residential areas and should be determined by the service area of an elementary school, local park and convenience shopping" (13).

The New Westminster "official community plan" adopted in 1998, seeks



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to balance growth “primarily through redevelopment and intensification of under-utilized land” with the city “retain[ing] its small town historic charm for residents.” During the consultation process, “the community emphasized that future growth needs to be well planned out, considerate of the neighbourhood and contribute to the overall livability of the City” (27-28). More specifically:

“The community feels that residential neighbourhoods should continue to provide a quality residential environment with quaint historic houses, newer compatible houses, as well as low rise and high rise apartments including neighbourhood facilities (such as parks, schools and grocery stores) within walking distance. The majority of future growth should be encouraged away from established single detached residential neighbourhoods to areas better suited to new growth”. (28)

The areas suggested during community consultation for “the location of new growth” were the Downtown, Quayside, “undeveloped and under-utilized areas” such as Lower 12th Street, along arterials, as part of commercial streets, around the 22nd Street Skytrain station, through secondary suites in houses, and “in neighbourhoods of the City with older, multi-family housing stock” (27-28). The plan also looked to reducing the “impacts of heavy traffic adjacent to single detached homes” along 10th Avenue, 20th Street, and 12th Street.

Residents attested to the value of neighbourhoods and of heritage, the two becoming intertwined in many minds especially in respect to Queen’s Park. The New Westminster Heritage Preservation Society was formed in 1974, shortly after two prominent Queen’s Park houses were demolished. The New Westminster Heritage Foundation was founded in 1992. That same year the older heritage society began publication of *The Preservationist* intended to draw public attention to heritage issues. Residents’ associations were formed in all New Westminster neighbourhoods.