



City of Vancouver *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

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DD (EXCEPT DOWNTOWN SOUTH) C-5, C-6, HA-1 AND HA-2 CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS

Adopted by City Council on December 16, 1975

*Amended January 26 and October 26, 1982, March 6, 1984, June 10 and
September 30, 1986, October 3, 1989, March 12 and July 30, 1991, March 25
and December 14, 1993, January 30, 1996, February 17, 1998, and December 4, 2003*

Contents

	Page
Character Area Descriptions.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Part A	
1 Existing Character Area A - Financial District.....	3
1.1 Existing Character	3
1.2 Assigned Role.....	3
1.3 Recommendations	3
2 Existing Character Area B - Hastings/Pender Shopping District	3
2.1 Description.....	3
2.2 Assigned Role.....	4
2.3 Recommendations	4
3 Existing Character Area C - Gastown.....	4
3.1 Description.....	4
3.2 Assigned Role.....	4
3.3 Recommendations	4
4 Existing Character Area D - Chinatown.....	5
4.1 Description.....	5
4.2 Assigned Role.....	5
4.3 Recommendation	5
5 Existing Character Area E - The Core.....	6
5.1 Existing Character	6
5.2 Assigned Role.....	6
5.3 Recommendations	6
6 Existing Character Area F - Golden Triangle	7
6.1 Description.....	7
6.2 Assigned Role.....	7
6.3 Recommendations	7
6.4 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 1: Bute Street (from the lane between Georgia and Melville Streets to the Coal Harbour Waterfront)	8
7 Potential Character Area I - Robson Square.....	8
7.1 Description.....	8
7.2 Assigned Role.....	8
7.3 Recommendations	8
8 Character Area L - Library Square	9
8.1 Description.....	9
8.2 Assigned Role.....	9
8.3 Recommendations	9
Part B	
1 Existing Character Area G - Georgia Street.....	21
1.1 Introduction	22
1.2 Development Objectives.....	22
1.3 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 1: Chilco-Cardero.....	25
1.4 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 2: Cardero-Bute.....	25
1.5 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 3: Bute-Thurlow.....	26

Contents (cont'd)

	Page
1.6	Supplementary Development Objectives For Sub-Area 4: Thurlow-Seymour 26
1.7	Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 5: Seymour-Beatty 28
2	Existing Character Area H - Alberni Street 29
2.1	Introduction 29
2.2	Development Objectives..... 30
3	Existing Character Area N - Robson Street 31
3.1	Introduction 31
3.2	Development Objectives..... 32
3.3	Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 1: Chilco-Denman 35
3.4	Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 2: Denman-Cardero 35
3.5	Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 3: Cardero-Jervis 36
3.6	Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 4: Jervis-Burrard 37
3.7	Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 5: Burrard-Seymour 39
3.8	Supplementary Development Objectives For Sub-Area 6: Seymour-Beatty..... 40

Character Area Descriptions

Introduction

The Downtown contains a number of different “character” areas which give the city a sense of time, place, diversity, and individuality.

These areas, some of which exist now and some of which have future potential, should be preserved, enhanced or developed appropriately.

The purpose of this section is to assist all involved in the development process by highlighting the present and future desired character of each area. These descriptions will be reviewed as ideas change and more detailed guidelines are prepared for some areas.

The map on Page 3 shows the approximate boundaries of each area. The descriptions are given in two parts: Part A being the character area descriptions approved by City Council December 16, 1975 and subsequently amended January 26 and October 26, 1982, March 6, 1984, and July 30, 1991; Part B being the character area descriptions approved by City Council March 6, 1984.

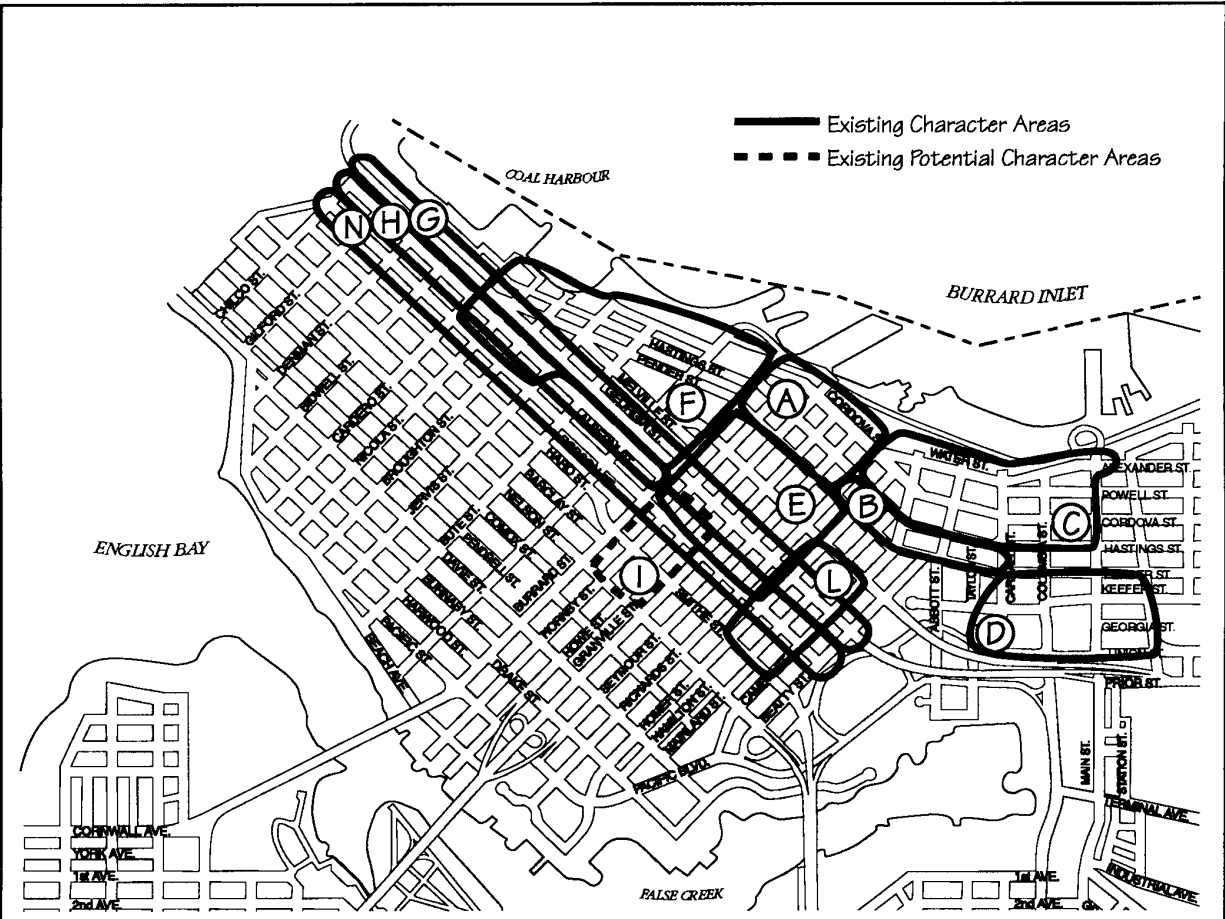
The character area descriptions are located as follows:

Part A

Area A - Financial District
Area B - Hastings/Pender Shopping District
Area C - Gastown
Area E - The Core
Area F - The Golden Triangle
Area I - Robson Square
Area L - Library Square

Part B

Area G - Georgia Street
Area H - Alberni Street
Area N - Robson Street



- (A) Financial
- (B) Hastings
- (C) Gastown
- (D) Chinatown
- (E) Central Core
- (F) Golden Triangle
- (G) Georgia St.
- (H) Alberni St.
- (I) Robson Square
- (L) Library Square
- (N) Robson St.

Central Area - Character Areas	date: 6/5/93	
	by: MG/dem	
City of Vancouver Planning Department	scale: 1:25000	

Part A

1 Existing Character Area A - Financial District

1.1 Existing Character

This is the older financial district, its commercial prestige now usurped by new areas. Here buildings of an earlier monumental character serve the business world during office hours only. The area **focuses** on Hastings and Pender between Burrard and Seymour. This district also serves as a transition zone in terms of height, use, style and age between the lower rise older Hastings/Pender shopping area and the new high-rise Golden Triangle with its heavy emphasis on office uses. However, the links to the Waterfront are tenuous or non-existent because of existing incompatibility of uses and the physical separation caused by the rail lines and the abrupt change in elevation.

1.2 Assigned Role

The existing character should be strengthened and any new development should harmonize in terms of use and scale with the existing environment. As the Waterfront is redeveloped links between it and the Financial District should be created so that it becomes a transition zone between other character areas and the Waterfront.

1.3 Recommendations

1.3.1 Activities

- (a) While office uses will predominate in this area innovative combination of uses should be encouraged in new and converted buildings wherever possible;
- (b) Where “some ground floor retail” is required, pedestrian interest should be provided through the provision of retail and similar uses. Building frontages that do not include retail or similar uses should maintain pedestrian interest through attractive and highly visible building entrances, windows, displays, public art, landscaping where appropriate, and other amenities.

1.3.2 Circulation and Amenity

- (a) Pedestrian routes down streets and where possible through blocks should link this area to the Waterfront as it develops. These routes should be extended to contiguous character areas;
- (b) Public open spaces associated with new developments should be oriented towards the harbour.

1.3.3 Physical Environment

- (a) Structures of architectural or historic significance should be preserved and refurbished;
- (b) New structures should respect the scale and architectural rhythms of existing buildings;
- (c) Generally facades should be full frontage particularly on Hastings Street; however, the configuration could be a tower on a podium, the latter being full frontage; and
- (d) Development proposals should coordinate their lighting, furniture and landscaping.

2 Existing Character Area B - Hastings/Pender Shopping District

2.1 Description

This older general and specialty retail district is situated along Hastings, between Seymour and Carrall. It is the major east/west transportation corridor to Downtown, saturated by traffic at peak hours. It has intense daytime retail activity with even longer periods of pedestrian and local community activity in the Skid Road section. It is an area of historical and unique character containing interesting building facades, and contains the only major green public park in Downtown.

2.2 Assigned Role

The area should continue as a shopping and mixed-use district. This role should be reinforced by alleviating the traffic problem, preserving the existing character, refurbishing the existing physical environment, protecting the local community, and strengthening its links to other areas.

2.3 Recommendations

2.3.1 Activities

- (a) Retail continuity along Hastings should be preserved, retaining the small-scale aspect of the outlets wherever possible;
- (b) Where “some ground floor retail” is required, pedestrian interest should be provided through the provision of retail and similar uses. Building frontages that do not include retail or similar uses should maintain pedestrian interest through attractive and highly visible building entrances, windows, displays, public art, landscaping where appropriate, and other amenities;
- (c) Office uses in existing buildings on the upper levels are encouraged particularly where it involves the renovation of interesting or unique structures. This applies only to those structures that at present do not contain residential uses;
- (d) Existing residential and hotel buildings should be preserved. Conversions of any building or parts of buildings into residential uses are encouraged wherever possible.

2.3.2 Circulation and Amenity

- (a) At present Hastings Street is a major pedestrian and transit route. The role of Hastings Street as a major pedestrian route and activity area should be maintained and strengthened;
- (b) Carrall Street should be emphasized as a major pedestrian route between Burrard Inlet and False Creek;
- (c) Community facilities should be provided along pedestrian routes;
- (d) Consideration should be given to the eventual enlargement of Victory Square to include a portion of Hamilton Street;
- (e) Cordova and Pender Streets should remain primarily vehicular routes except in Chinatown.

2.3.3 Physical Environment

- (a) New structures should respect the scale and architectural rhythms of existing buildings;
- (b) Structures of architectural interest or significance should be restored and renovated;
- (c) Development proposals should coordinate their lighting, furniture, and landscaping.

3 Existing Character Area C - Gastown

3.1 Description

A popular, medium-density, historic area containing a heavy concentration of mixed retail, restaurant and entertainment uses with some office activity in the upper floors all of which are presently experiencing fairly rapid growth. Commercial uses which are highly specialized co-exist with an indigenous low income residential population as well as considerable amounts of warehousing or light industrial activity.

3.2 Assigned Role

As well as maintaining its role as a predominantly retail/entertainment activity area Gastown should strengthen its residential component in order to supply housing and strengthen its sense of community. As harbour development occurs, Gastown should cease to be only a destination point for visitors and become also an access and support area to the Waterfront linking it to Chinatown and False Creek.

3.3 Recommendations

3.3.1 Activities

- (a) Residential uses above street level, should be encouraged throughout the area;

- (b) Retail and entertainment uses at or near street level and mixed office/residential uses above should be encouraged to expand westward with a view to establishing stronger links with the downtown core and the waterfront interchange.

3.3.2 Circulation and Amenity

- (a) Heavy pedestrian emphasis should be encouraged on Water, Carrall and Powell and other streets in order to strengthen links between Gastown, the Waterfront, Chinatown, False Creek, and the Educational/Cultural Area;
- (b) Lands abutting the lanes, particularly south of Water Street between Carrall and Cambie Streets, should be developed with open spaces and retail uses. Mid-block courtyards and links should be established so as to connect these routes to Water and Cordova Streets;
- (c) New developments or renovated structures along the north side of Water and Alexander Streets should, where possible, provide direct access to the Waterfront area or at least to open spaces that allow views of the Waterfront.

3.3.3 Physical Environment

- (a) New structures should respect the scale and bulk of existing buildings;
- (b) Continuous street facades, architectural rhythms, details and colour that presently exist in the area should be preserved. The varied setbacks of the alleyways should be used to create interesting pedestrian spaces;
- (c) Demolition of existing buildings should be subject to review of the Heritage Board;
- (d) Coordination of signage as well as installation of street planting, furniture, period lighting, and historic sidewalk and street treatment should be continued.

4 Existing Character Area D - Chinatown

4.1 Description

Chinatown is an ethnic community centre fulfilling the daily and cultural needs of the Chinese population and providing varied and unique pedestrian experiences to others as well. Retail activity shifts from the Chinese oriented outlets such as grocery and meat stores on Pender east of Main to the tourist oriented import/export stores, curio shops and restaurants west of Main. The architecture is unique to the area, especially the recessed balcony facades, colours and signage.

4.2 Assigned Role

This physical and cultural environment should be strengthened and allowed to grow beyond its present boundaries.

4.3 Recommendation

4.3.1 Activities

- (a) Uses similar to the present ones at and above grade should be extended:
 - to Hastings between Carrall and Gore Streets;
 - to Keefer between Main and Gore Streets;
 - along Main between Hastings and Union Streets; and
 - south towards False Creek roughly following a corridor between Columbia and Carrall Streets.
- (b) Residential uses should be encouraged in the upper levels of buildings and in any nearby redevelopment schemes on False Creek lands.

4.3.2 Circulation and Amenity

- (a) Problems of traffic in this area are presently under review, however they are identifiable and some tentative answers are being investigated:
 - (i) Vehicular traffic along Pender through Chinatown is heavy and conflicts with the pedestrian activities and uses bordering it. A limited vehicular or transit pedestrian

route along Pender between Carrall and Gore streets is a possible solution to this conflict and is under investigation;

- (ii) A Chinese Cultural Centre, presently under study, would provide public and social amenities as well as open spaces, links to False Creek, residential uses and a southern focus for Carrall Street. However, part of the proposed site is bisected by the Pender/Keefer Division, and methods of dealing with this problem are under investigation;
- (b) Through block pedestrian connections, particularly from Pender to Hastings Street, should be encouraged. Development adjacent to lanes should provide amenity features.

4.3.3 Physical Environment

- (a) New or renovated structures should respect the character and scale of existing buildings;
- (b) The narrow frontages, continuous and unique street facades and fenestrations as well as the various setbacks of alleyways, and the potential open space they define, should be preserved;
- (c) Special care should be taken in preserving or opening views down streets particularly along Carrall both ways towards the water, and west along Pender to the Sun Tower;
- (d) Street planting, seating, lighting standards and general design of streets should conform to the unique character of the area.

5 Existing Character Area E - The Core

5.1 Existing Character

Three major Downtown streets (Georgia, Burrard and Granville Mall) intersect within the area, and a mixture of major, prestige, public and private projects and open spaces have grown up around these intersections. These buildings, spanning a number of years, and reflecting a number of historical styles, include a variety of prestige urban uses lending the area its identity as the Core. It is the major centre for tourism, lunchtime shopping, business and entertainment.

5.2 Assigned Role

This area should grow as a strong, elegant Downtown focus, to take advantage of its central location, its development momentum, and the major public improvements existing or underway such as the Granville Mall and the Provincial Complex. With the implementation of traffic de-emphasis and the upgrading of the Transit system its intense use and future vitality as the major office, tourist, shopping and entertainment centre should be assured.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Activities

- (a) High-density office and hotel uses should be permitted;
- (b) Require retail uses at grade in specific locations including:
 - (i) Granville Mall
 - (ii) Seymour Street north of Georgia
 - (iii) Richards Street north of Pender
 - (iv) Pender Street between Granville and Richards
 - (v) Hastings Street between Granville and Richards;
- (c) On Hastings, east of Granville, and other locations that are designated retail required, retail continuity should be provided at or near street level;
- (d) Where “some ground floor retail” is required, pedestrian interest should be provided through the location of retail and similar uses. Building frontages that do not include retail or similar uses should maintain pedestrian interest through attractive and highly visible building entrances, windows, displays, public art, landscaping where appropriate, and other amenities.

5.3.2 Circulation and Amenity

- (a) Provide for future transit/pedestrian or limited vehicular designation of Robson, east of Granville by restricting parking access and providing retail space;

- (b) Discourage extensive increases in parking in the core area, to permit future traffic de-emphasis as improvements permit;
- (c) (i) Encourage a mid-block pedestrian route linking Hudsons Bay to the proposed park at Burrard and Dunsmuir through blocks 40, 41, 42, 43, and 44;
- (ii) Maintain options for grade separated crossing of Seymour, Granville (existing), Howe, Hornby and Burrard.

5.3.3 Physical Environment

- (a) Maintain views of the Hotel Vancouver and of the proposed Courthouse Complex.

6 Existing Character Area F - Golden Triangle

6.1 Description

The area consists of an established high-density prestige employment node east of Thurlow tending to expand westward into an area of older apartments and smaller office structures. It is supported by transit on the edges, but at the present excessive parking exists above and below grade. Limited pedestrian activity is located on Georgia and Burrard. However, the nucleus of a strong underground retail system west of Burrard exists below grade in the Bentall and Royal Centres.

6.2 Assigned Role

- (a) East of Thurlow the existing high-density employment node will focus around a new urban park, plazas, and a proposed transit stop;
- (b) West of Thurlow should be a medium- to high-density mixed-use area encouraging residential uses with links between the West End and the Waterfront.

6.3 Recommendations

6.3.1 Activities

- (a) The area west of Thurlow should provide grade level pedestrian-oriented uses (retail, entertainment and services), particularly as they relate to a possible mid-block pedestrian route between Thurlow and Bute from Georgia Street to the waterfront. Otherwise mixed-use developments including residential are encouraged west of Bute Street;
- (b) In the area east of Thurlow existing retail uses are below grade in interior malls, with office and hotel uses in high-rise structure. Links within this underground retail system should be provided;
- (c) Street fronting ground floor retail uses should be provided on Georgia St. between Bute and Burrard;
- (d) Where “some ground floor retail” is required, pedestrian interest should be provided through the location of retail and similar uses. Building frontages that do not include retail or similar uses should maintain pedestrian interest through attractive and highly visible building entrances, windows, displays, public art, landscaping where appropriate, and other amenities.

6.3.2 Circulation and Amenity

- (a) A surface pedestrian route running mid-block between Bute and Thurlow Streets from Georgia to the harbour front should be established;
- (b) The interior pedestrian retail malls of the Royal and Bentall Centres should be linked through a major urban park (Bowmac site). Mid-block development of pedestrian links should connect to Alberni and then to Robson Street;
- (c) A pedestrian link from the proposed Bowmac urban park should be established at or below grade to a possible open space associated with a new development at the S.E. corner of Burrard and Dunsmuir. This, in turn, could eventually be part of a mid-block pedestrian route to Pacific Centre and the Bay;
- (d) Provision should be made for a future rapid transit stop near the proposed park.

6.4 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 1: Bute Street (from the lane between Georgia and Melville Streets to the Coal Harbour Waterfront)

6.4.1 Image Character

- (a) Develop as a neighbourhood centre with retail/commercial uses serving local residents.
- (b) Encourage retail uses to extend around corners to integrate with Pender and Hastings Street commercial frontages.

6.4.2 Pedestrians

- (a) Reinforce the pedestrian link between the West End/Robson Street and the Bute Street end Plaza and Harbour Green Park.

6.4.3 Public Realm

- (a) Incorporate the Triangle West public realm treatments on both sides of Bute Street.

6.4.4 Special Opportunities for Further Consideration

- (a) Investigate opportunities for incorporating pedestrian oriented uses at grade that will further enhance Bute Street as a Neighbourhood Centre into existing building frontages between Pender and Hastings Streets.

7 Potential Character Area I - Robson Square

Note: More detailed guidelines for this area are under consideration by the City in consultation with the Provincial Government.

7.1 Description

The Provincial Government precinct now under construction will be an intense activity area which will focus on a central north-south spine incorporating major civic and provincial facilities and terraced public open space. Its location (between the present core, Granville Mall, Robson Street and the West End), the mix of pedestrian activity it will provide, and its design, will generate intense activity and development that should spread to the adjoining blocks.

7.2 Assigned Role

A multi-use civic focus containing open spaces of varying size, character, and elevation as well as government agencies, law courts, and retail or market activities, and offices. It could be the northern anchor of a Georgia/False Creek link and may provide various linkages through it from Granville Mall and the Downtown Core to Burrard Street and the West End.

7.3 Recommendations

7.3.1 Activities

- (a) To complement the various uses in the precinct, small-scale retail activity should be continued along Robson and Hornby Streets, as well as around and within Blocks 60 and 62.

7.3.2 Circulation and Amenity

- (a) Pedestrian circulation routes in proposals around the complex should be encouraged to link at various levels with the internal circulation patterns within the complex, particularly from Block 61 to Blocks 60 and 62;
- (b) Continuous frontages along Robson may be achieved by realigning the lanes in Blocks 60 and 62;
- (c) Proposals should be encouraged to combine parking access points with adjoining developments; and

- (d) Proposals in Block 60 should maintain options for access to underground rapid transit on the Hornby Street alignment.

7.3.3 Physical Environment

- (a) New buildings on Howe in particular, and Hornby south of Robson should be subject to detailed sun and shade analysis to ensure sunlight on the various public areas of the Courthouse proposal;
- (b) Generally lower maximum heights are expected on Howe Street than on Hornby, although higher elements should be permitted provided they are set back behind a lower street fronting facade. On Howe these should observe the approximate cornice line of Eaton's and the Grosvenor Hotel. On Hornby, generally lower podium elements and taller slimmer towers to maintain remaining westerly views are preferred.

8 Character Area L - Library Square

8.1 Description

The Library Square development will be an intense activity area which has the opportunity to become a focus of surrounding development. Its location between Robson Street and Georgia Street with potential pedestrian linkages to Victory Square and Downtown South, as well as the Stadium and False Creek North, the mix of pedestrian activity it will generate, and its design will generate increased activity and development that should spread to the adjoining blocks not yet developed to their potential.

8.2 Assigned Role

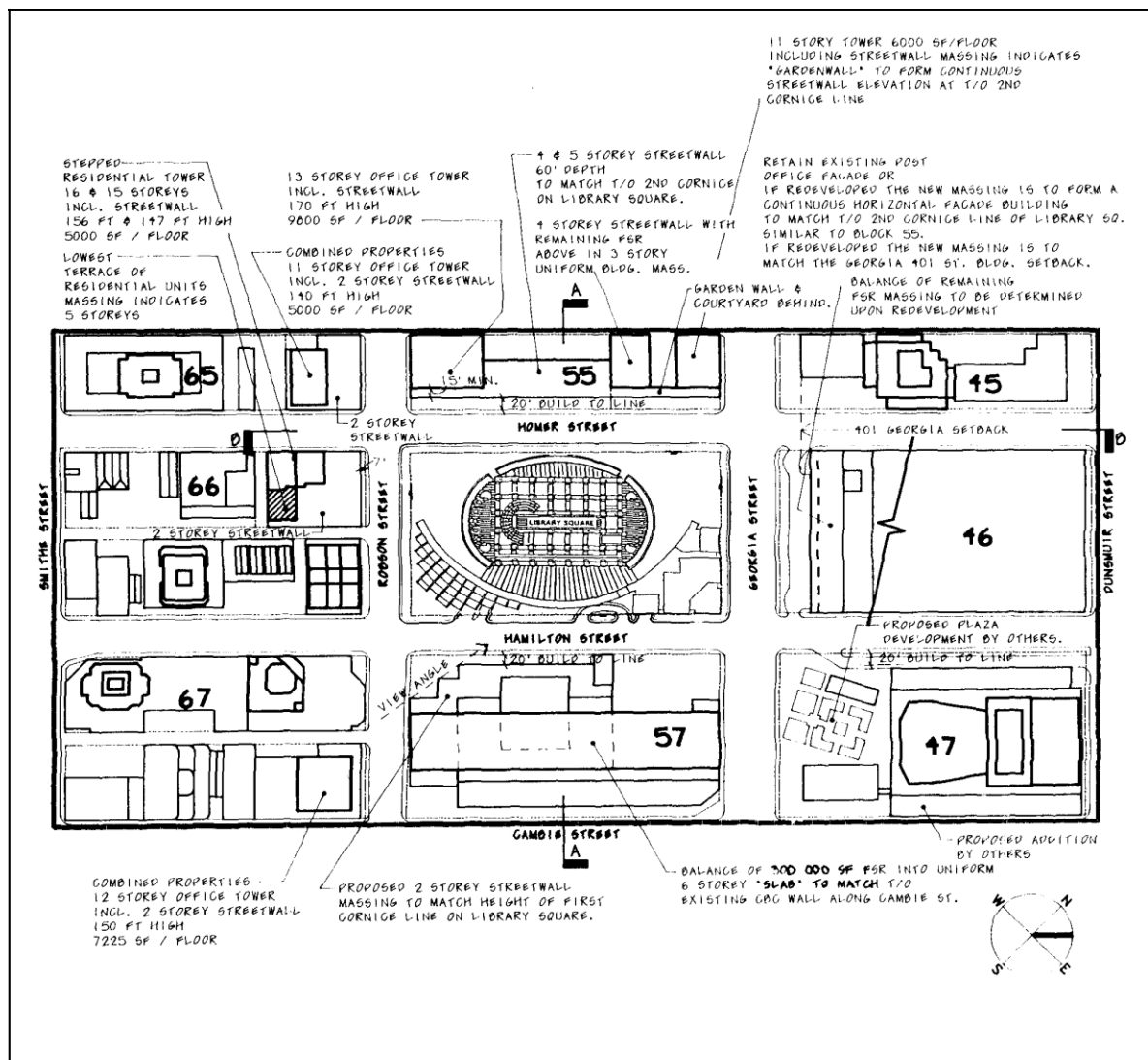
The area will have a civic focus containing open plazas, public institutions, the Library facility, grade level retail activities and offices. The design of Library Square will allow various linkages through it in a north, south-east and west direction. Library Square could become a civic hub which links Downtown South, the Stadium, False Creek North and the Theatre precinct, the central business district and districts to the north-east through to Gastown.

8.3 Recommendations

8.3.1 Image and Character

Reinforce the image and physical character of those developments directly fronting on Library Square as part of a unique Precinct in Vancouver, one that essentially frames Library Square as a significant public amenity and place.

Figure 1. Urban Design Concept



8.3.2 Activities

- (a) To enhance and complement the various uses in the Precinct, small-scale retail activity should be continued along Robson Street, and encouraged on Homer and Hamilton Streets directly across from Library Square;
- (b) Uses permitted in addition to retail could include residential, hotel and/or office south of Robson Street and commercial/office/civic and entertainment north of Robson Street.
- (c) Develop the Homer Street block directly opposite Library Square as a gathering place through the provision of a significant setback, a tree canopy, a substantial number of benches, public art, and other means to animate the space;
- (d) Maintain Georgia Street as a ceremonial boulevard;
- (e) Enhance the Queen Elizabeth Theatre plaza as a key gathering space along Georgia Street;
- (f) Enhance the north side of Georgia Street as a pedestrian route through the use of a double row of street trees; and
- (g) Maintain and enhance Robson Street, within the Library Precinct, as an informal and interesting pedestrian oriented street.

8.3.3 Circulation And Amenity

- (a) Pedestrian routes along Georgia and Robson Streets should recognize the preeminence of these two important Vancouver streets;
- (b) The pedestrian linkage to Terry Fox Plaza along Robson Street will serve to link the Library Square Precinct to the stadium area, and should be enhanced by use of characteristic pedestrian scale lighting, public art, and street furniture;
- (c) Pedestrian routes south along Homer and Hamilton Streets should be reinforced to link the residential neighbourhoods of Downtown South with Library Square;
- (d) Public open spaces associated with new developments along Georgia Street should orient themselves to reinforce the intended ceremonial, processional character of Georgia Street;
- (e) Public open spaces are not encouraged along Robson Street but rather low pedestrian scale built form at the sidewalk edge i.e., typically two storeys, should continue to define the Robson Street area. (Note: there is a 7 ft. building line on Robson Street to accommodate a widened sidewalk);
- (f) At present, Georgia and Robson Streets are major pedestrian and transit routes and these activities should be maintained and strengthened;
- (g) Hamilton Street should be emphasized as a major pedestrian route linking Downtown South, Yaletown and Victory Square to Library Square. This should be enhanced through the provision of a consistent 20 foot setback, consistent use of a street tree and tree surround, and public art referencing the civic institutions along that route;
- (h) A 20 foot setback is required along the west side of Homer Street, between Robson and Georgia Streets, to provide for a wide sidewalk that would permit seating areas outside street level uses as well as a double row of street trees and tree surrounds;
- (i) Vehicular access to Hamilton and Homer - fronting developments should be taken from Cambie Street and the lane respectively so as to retain the street setbacks exclusively in the pedestrian domain.

8.3.4 Physical Environment

- (a) The Robson Street character area and the Georgia Street character area guidelines should be read in conjunction with these guidelines;
- (b) New structures should respect the scale and architectural rhythm of Library Square;
- (c) Generally, facades should extend along the full frontage of the development in order to “frame” Library Square. However, the configuration could be a tower on a podium, the latter being along the full frontage of the development;
- (d) Buildings that directly face Library Square proper should, in their exterior design, relate to the various cornice lines of Library Square and incorporate the materials, colours, wall to window ratios and detailing that complements the substantiveness and depth of the facades of Library Square;
- (e) Building height and mass should minimize shadowing on the Library Square open plazas between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. P.S.T. at the equinox. In instances where some shadowing of plazas at the equinox is unavoidable, an in-depth shadow analysis (beyond that normally required) should be undertaken to determine the building height and mass that maximizes the shadow-free period between the equinoxes;
- (f) Generally, lower maximum heights are expected on those developments that directly face Library Square although higher elements could be permitted provided they are set back from a lower street fronting facade. These facade heights are illustrated on the massing diagrams. These facade heights respond to the various cornice lines of Library Square;
- (g) Where possible, on those developments that directly face Library Square, tower elements above the street wall facades should be balanced in terms of massing and tower location, relative to Library Square;
- (h) Building elements, particularly those at lower levels of the street, should be designed and treated to provide a human scale relationship that is pedestrian-compatible;

8.3.5 Streetscape

- (a) Streetscape Character

The intent of the streetscape design in the Library Precinct is to express the special character of the precinct, create an appealing public realm and to link Library Square with the Terry Fox Plaza and Victory Square;

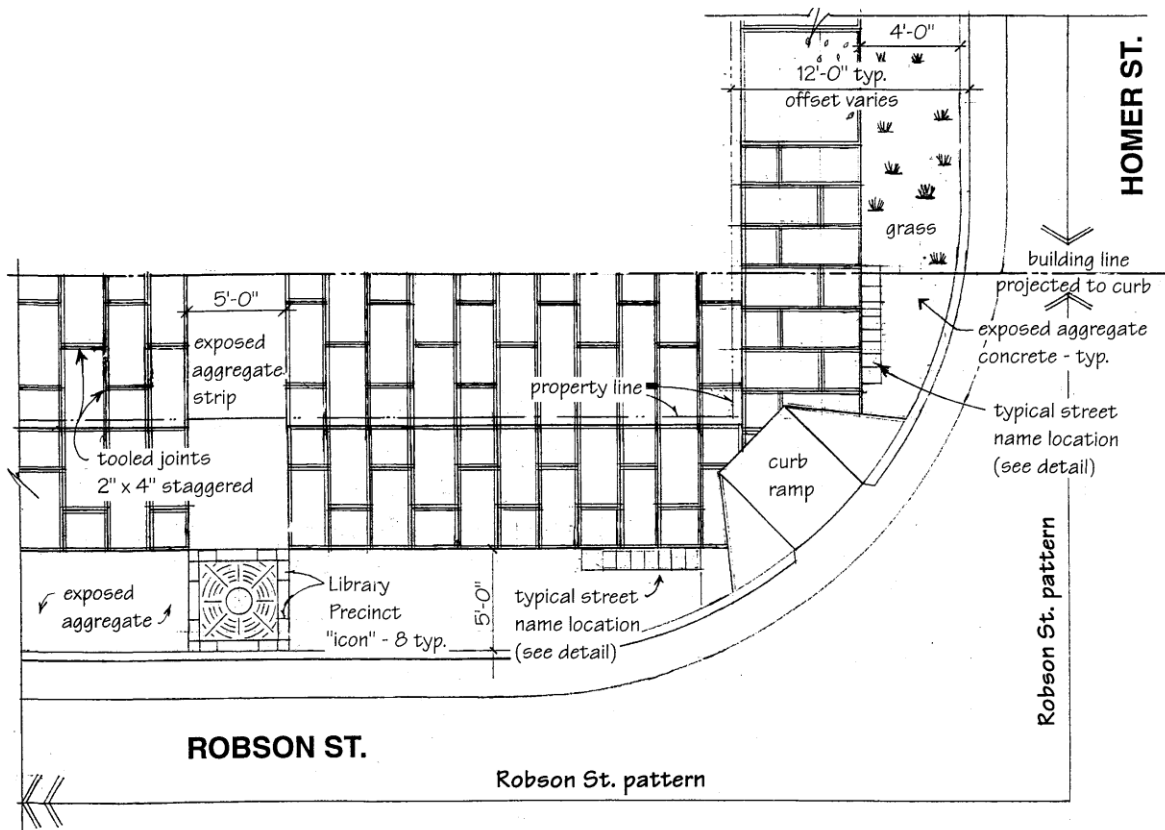
- (b) Trees
 - (i) Tulip trees should be planted on all blocks facing Library Square (except Georgia Street), the 100, 200 and 400 blocks of Robson Street, and the 600 and 700 blocks of Hamilton Street. Tulip trees planted on the west side of the 700 block of Homer Street, opposite Library Square, should be in a double row where buildings are required to be set back more than 10 feet from the property line;
 - (ii) Maple trees should be planted along Georgia Street to match the cultivar, size and spacing selected for Library Square. Where possible, a double row of trees should be planted on the north side of Georgia Street;
 - (iii) Trees on other streets should be planted with reference to neighbouring street tree plantings, in order to ensure diversity in the selection of tree types based on the advice of Park Board staff;
 - (iv) Trees of significant calliper and form to complement the trees of Library Square should be planted;
 - (v) Trees are to be planted approximately every 25 feet on centre depending on various constraints for each block face, as determined by Engineering Services;
- (c) Sidewalks and Tree Grates
 - (i) Sidewalks

Sidewalk areas (see Figures 2 and 3) should be concrete, except for the west side of 700 block Homer Street. They should have the following finishes and patterns;

 - (1) Robson Street

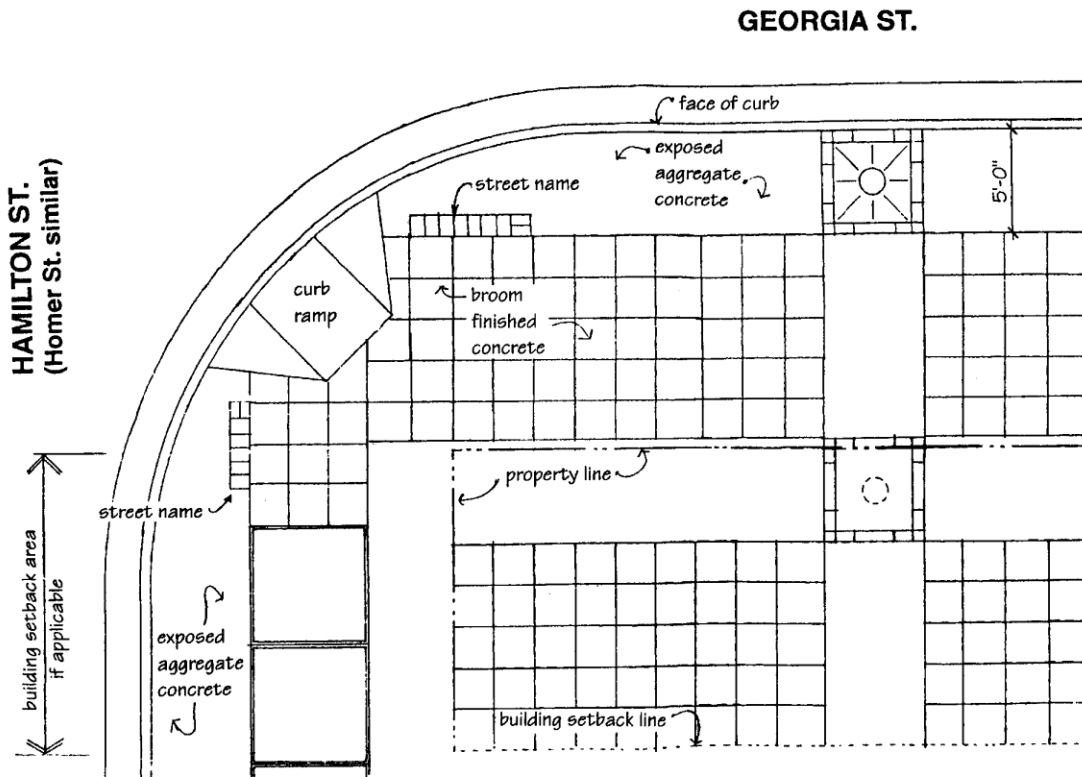
Broom finished concrete with tool lines to create panels have a 2 foot by 4 foot stretcher bond pattern with exposed aggregate bands across the sidewalk at each tree location;

Figure 2. Sidewalk Treatment - Robson Street



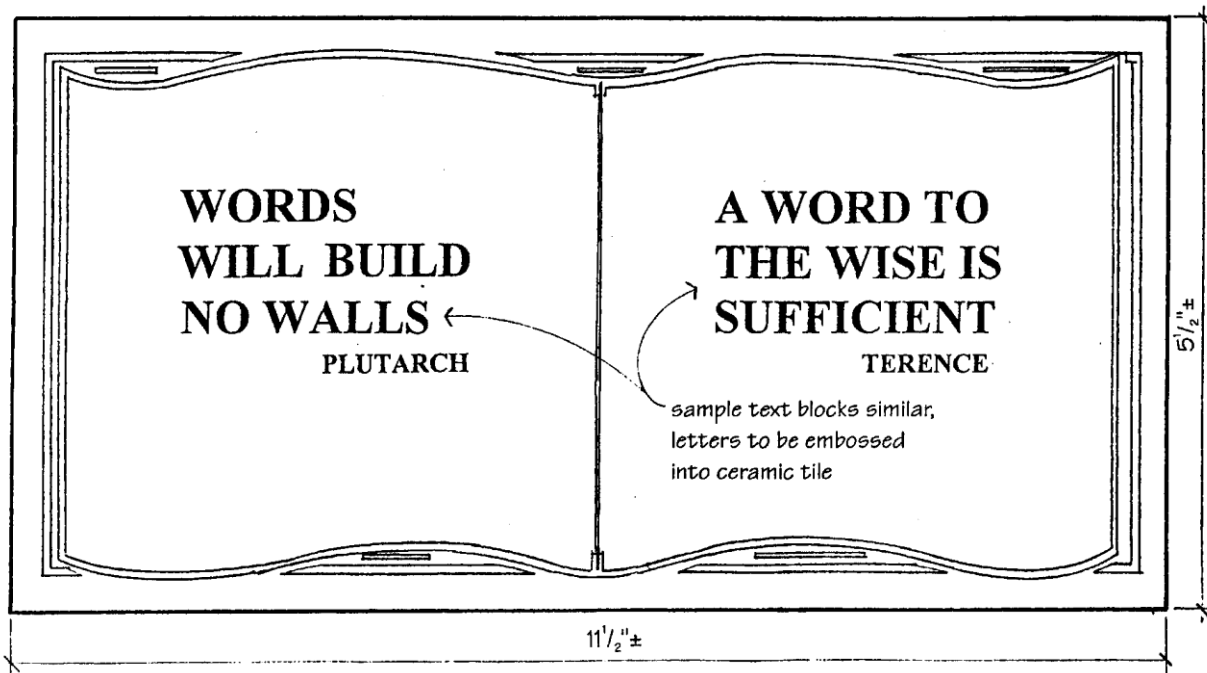
- (2) Georgia Street
Broom finished concrete with tool lines to create panels having a 2 foot by 2 foot grid with pattern exposed aggregate bands across the sidewalk at each tree location;

Figure 3. Sidewalk Treatment - Georgia Street



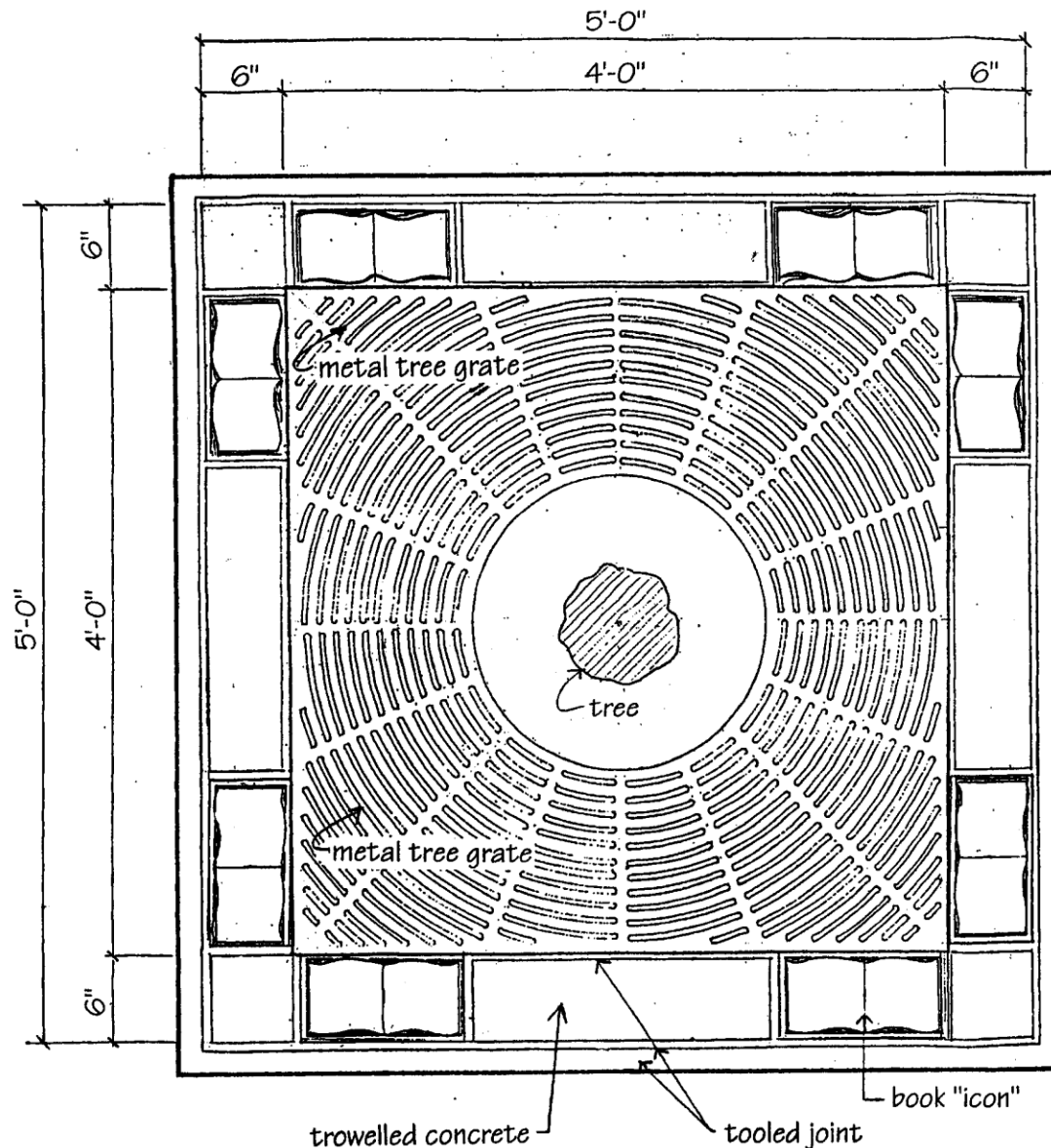
- (3) Hamilton Street
Standard broom finished concrete sidewalk; and
- (4) Homer Street
The west side of the 700 block Homer Street should have concrete cobble paving stones (4½ inches by 2¾ inches) (half standard pavers) to match the Library Square plaza and sidewalk treatment. On the 600 block, the standard broom finished concrete sidewalk;
- (ii) Front Boulevard Areas
Front boulevard areas should be a strip of exposed aggregate concrete that is 5 feet wide on Robson Street, Georgia Street, Hamilton Street and the west side of the 700 block Homer Street. On the 600 block Homer Street, the front boulevard should be either exposed aggregate concrete or grass, with grass being used if the ground floor is being used for residential use. On the east side of the 700 block Hamilton Street, the grass boulevard may be retained;
- (d) Tree Grates, Surrounds and Book Tile Icons
 - (i) Unpainted ductile cast iron tree grates (4 feet by 4 feet) complete with frames should be installed around all trees (see Figure 5);

Figure 4. Book Tile Icon



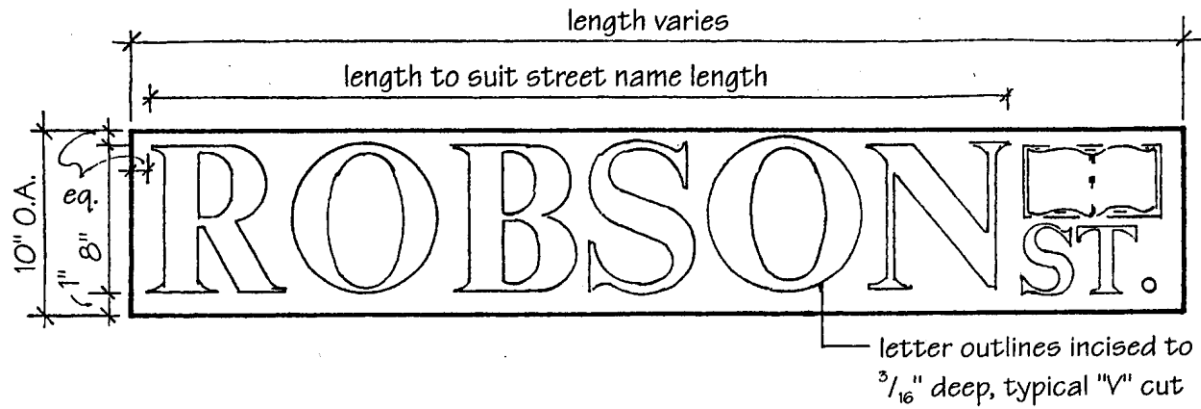
- (ii) Vitrified press moulded ceramic Book Tile Icons ($5\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $11\frac{1}{2}$) with book shape and text phrases set in relief should be installed in the 6 inch wide concrete tree surrounds (see Figure 4). The Book Tile Icons should be frost proof and have a slip resistant surface. Eight tiles should be installed within each tree surround. Tree surrounds should only be placed around new trees due to construction constraints caused by roots on mature trees;

Figure 5. Tree Grates and Tree Surrounds



- (iii) Each tile should be imprinted with a text phrase, except for those adjacent to the curb of the street. The text phrases to be imprinted on the tiles should be supplied by the Vancouver Public Library staff from works of literature and other sources;
- (e) Street Name Stones
 - (i) The street name should be carved in relief into Fox Island granite stone with 8 inch letters in a 10 inch wide by 3 inch thick piece of non-skid Fox Island granite with salt and pepper texture (see Figure 6). The length of the stone should be determined by the length of the street name. It should be set on a 3 inch thick concrete bed with the top of the granite flush with the top of the sidewalk. Each sidewalk corner should have 2 street name stones, one for each intersecting street and include all intersections along Robson Street from and including Homer Street to Beatty Street, and the intersections of Georgia and Homer Streets and Georgia and Hamilton Streets;

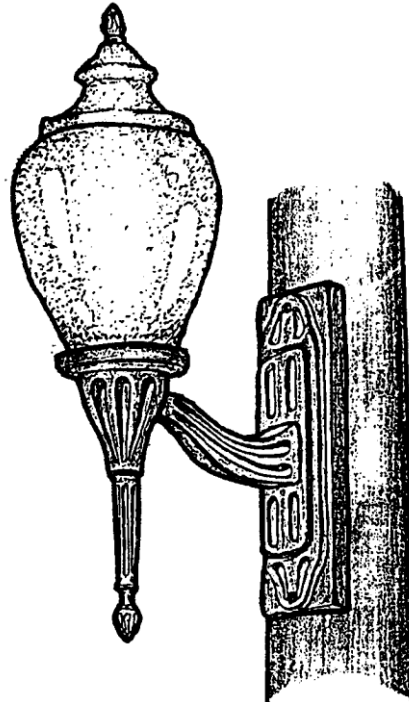
Figure 6. Street Name in Stone



- (f) Street Furniture
 - (i) Outdoor furniture should generally be located in the setback areas. Approval of Engineering Services is required for any street furniture located on City property;
 - (ii) Benches, litter containers and bicycle racks should be installed where appropriate in the setback strip between the property line and the face of the building. All street furniture should meet city specifications;
- (g) Pedestrian Lighting

Freestanding and pole mounted pedestrian lighting (see Figure 7) should be placed in an alternating pattern along the street at locations specified by Engineering Services;

Figure 7. Pedestrian Lighting



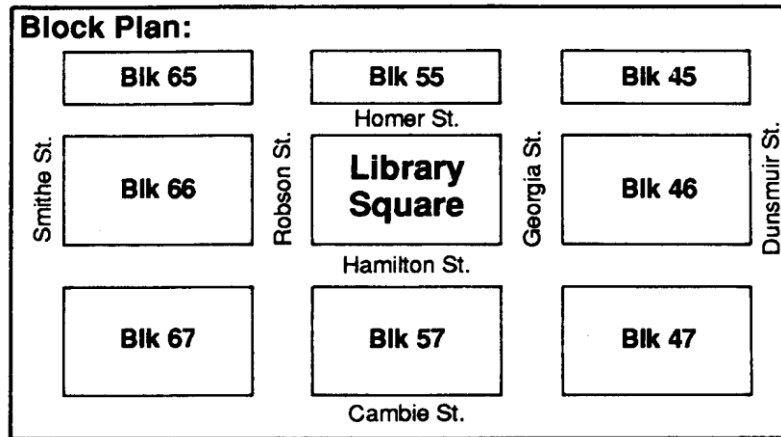
- (h) Library Precinct Colour

All painted surfaces, including sidewalk furniture, benches, litter containers, pedestrian lights, bicycle racks, etc., should be painted Library Square black;

- (i) Specifications
Details and specifications for all streetscape design elements as outlined in the Library Precinct Streetscape Manual (available from the Streets Division of Engineering Services) are to be incorporated into development applications. Alternative designs or variations will not be approved;
- (j) Public Art
Public art should be developed through various forms and media, including sculpture, icons, text, and other means that reference the civic functions of the area, local histories, and particularly the presence of the library. Public art projects should be coordinated so that individual projects relate to the neighbouring context of public art.

8.3.6 Massing Recommendations for Each Block

Key Map



- (a) CBC BLOCK (Blk 57):
If the CBC Block is further developed in the future then:
 - (i) a 20 foot building setback should be provided on the east side of Hamilton Street; and
 - (ii) a street wall massing along Hamilton Street should be to a height (approximately 30 ft.) directly relating to the first cornice line on Library Square (see Figures 2 and 4); and
 - (iii) higher elements should be set back a minimum of 15 feet. The bulk of the development should occur preferably on the Robson Street end, recognizing the desirability of maintaining the corner entrance plaza of block 57 at Hamilton and Georgia Streets. The recommended massing illustrates a new building at the south end of the property, along Robson Street, and building mass distributed uniformly along Hamilton Street to a maximum height matching the existing CBC building - approximately 90 feet. Further, a street level view angle should be maintained from Robson Street to Library Square (specifically a terraced retail component with its public entry stair at the Robson/Hamilton corner) as one approaches Hamilton Street while driving or walking northwest on Robson Street.
- (b) QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE BLOCK (Blk 47):
Further development of office space along the Cambie Street frontage of the theatre complex by the construction of a building within the setback area can be considered. A 20 foot setback on the east side of Hamilton Street similar to that on the CBC Block should be maintained. A building setback of 30 feet on Georgia Street should also be observed in any new development.

- (c) **POST OFFICE BLOCK (Blk 46):**
On the Post Office Block, the existing Georgia Street facade or re-building a similar street wall structure should be provided and the 30 foot setback on Georgia Street should be retained in line with the 401 West Georgia tower. A considerable degree of flexibility of development should be allowed on the balance of the site, while taking into account impacts on adjacent sites such as 401 West Georgia and the plazas of 311 Dunsmuir Street (B.C. Hydro Building). However, the key component related to the Library Square Precinct is the Georgia Street wall mass. It is recommended that it be kept to a height directly relating to the second cornice line (approximately 60 feet) of Library Square and then setback a further 15 feet above that level (see Figures 3 and 4).
- (d) **401 WEST GEORGIA BLOCK (Blk 45):**
It is assumed that there will be no redevelopment in the foreseeable future on the 401 West Georgia Block. The building setback for the north side of Georgia Street uses the beam “setback” of 30 feet as the standard for setbacks on other properties to the east. Any redevelopment on this site should retain the 30 foot setback.
- (e) **700 BLOCK HOMER STREET (Blk 55):**
The recommended massing shows a street wall approximately 60 feet high that corresponds with the top of the second cornice line on Library Square (see figures 2 and 5). This horizontal build-to line would also require a 20 foot building setback from the Homer Street property line. Floors rising above the 60 foot street wall should occur at an additional minimum setback of 15 feet from the street facade.

The location of the tower elements should be at the Georgia/Homer and the Robson/Homer Street corners. Along Robson and Georgia Streets, the two tower portions should be clearly differentiated from the street wall, either through additional setback or through a 3-dimensional expression of the cornice line to leave no doubt as to its continuity with Library Square - including those portions of the elevations fronting on Georgia and Robson Streets. To whatever extent possible, the two tower elements should be balanced in terms of apparent mass and location.

- (f) **800 BLOCK HOMER STREET (Blk 65):**
Development of this portion of the Block assumes that the two potential re-development sites at the south-west corner of Robson and Homer Streets are amalgamated into a single development site. The massing illustrates a two-storey street wall form that respects the 7 foot building line on Robson Street and follows the property line on Homer Street. There is flexibility in where this tower is placed on the site.

Alternatively, if all the potential redevelopment properties on the north end of the block were consolidated, a larger tower/podium form could occur and would be acceptable subject to an evaluation of shadow impacts on the Robson/Homer Street Library Square Plaza. Building height and mass should minimize shadowing on the Library Square open plazas between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. P.S.T. at the equinox. In instances where some shadowing of plazas at the equinox is unavoidable, an in-depth shadow analysis (beyond that normally required) should be undertaken to determine the building height and mass that maximizes the shadow-free period between the equinoxes.

- (g) **BLOCK 66:**
There is only one site on this block that has yet to be developed or be approved for development that could have a direct influence on Library Square. It is located at the southeast corner of Robson Street and Homer Street.

A two-storey podium following the 7 foot building line on Robson Street is required. There should be no setback from the property line on Homer Street. Building mass above the podium should be located on the extreme southwestern corner of the property recognizing minimum setback requirements from adjacent developments, in order to minimize shadowing on the Homer/Robson Library Square plaza. Further, this building form must attempt to maximize sunlight on this important plaza. Therefore, floor plates in the tower element

should be configured and the top of the tower should be “stepped” to maximize sunlight on the plaza. The massing illustrates a terraced tower which reduces shadow impact on the plaza (see Figures 1 and 3).

(h) 800 BLOCK CAMBIE STREET (Blk 67):

There are two development sites on the south-eastern corner of Robson and Cambie Street yet to receive development approval, that could influence Library Square. The recommended massing illustrates a solution based on 12 foot floor-to-floor heights with the building built out to the property line, with the exception of Robson Street which observes the seven foot building line. It assumes amalgamation of the two properties to allow for one development consisting of a two-storey podium with tower. The two-storey podium should maintain the building line on Robson Street which is seven feet back from the property line and the street wall should abut Cambie Street. The location of the tower should take into account view and livability impacts on adjacent tower developments and shadowing on Robson Street.

Note: The illustrations in Figures 1-5 are for conceptual illustrative purposes only. The ultimate form of development for each site will be the result of further in-depth urban design analysis (e.g. shadowing) at the rezoning or development application stage.

Figure 8. Cross-section - Homer Street and Hamilton Street

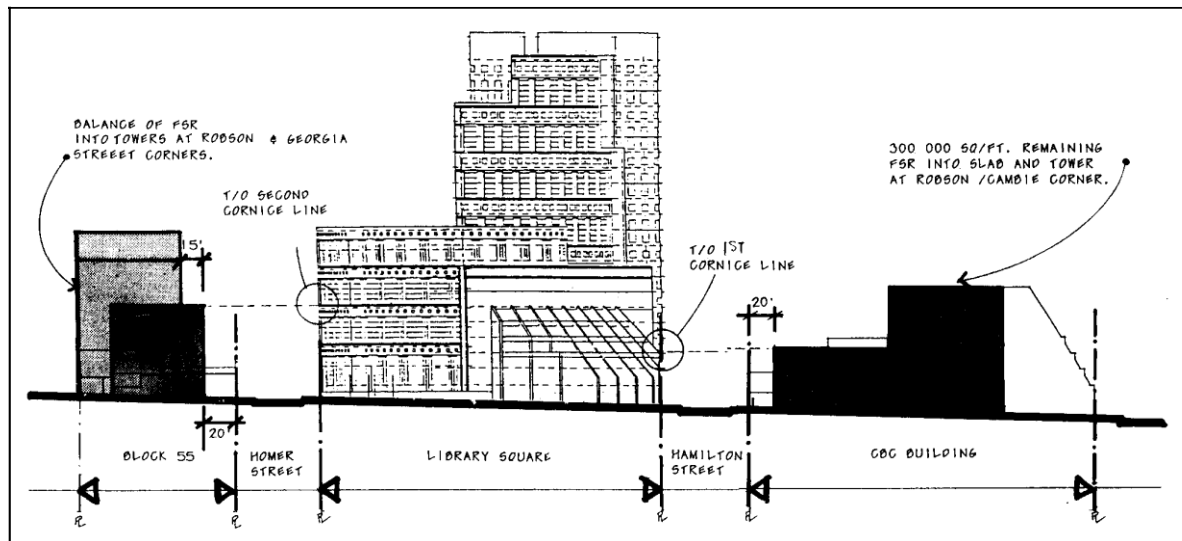


Figure 9. Cross-section - Georgia Street and Robson Street

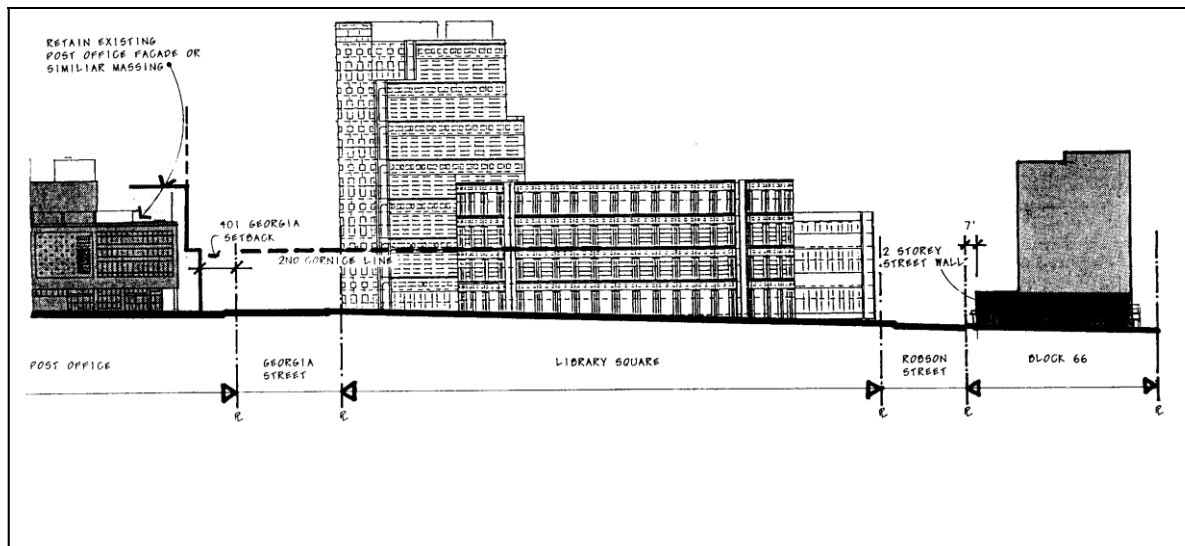


Figure 10. Partial Hamilton Street Elevation

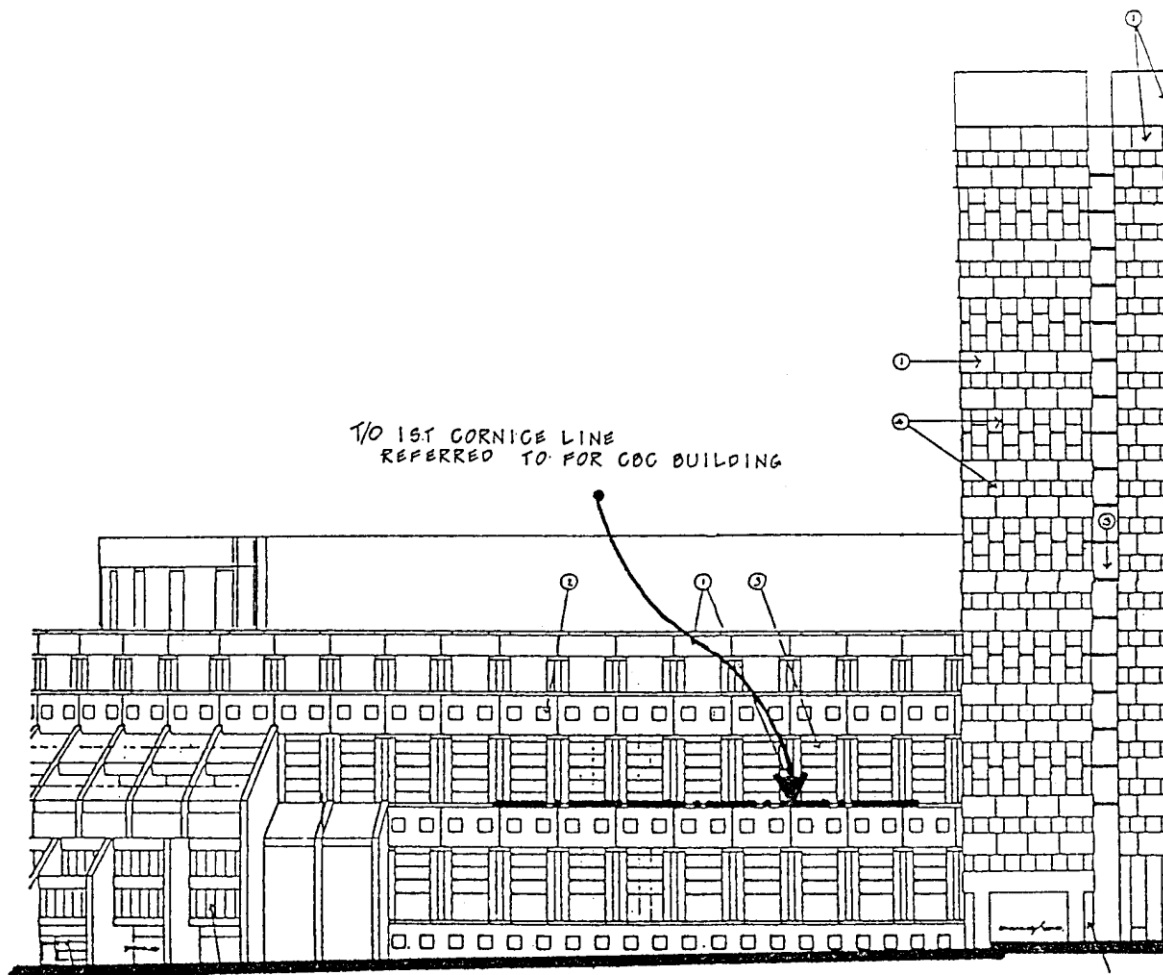
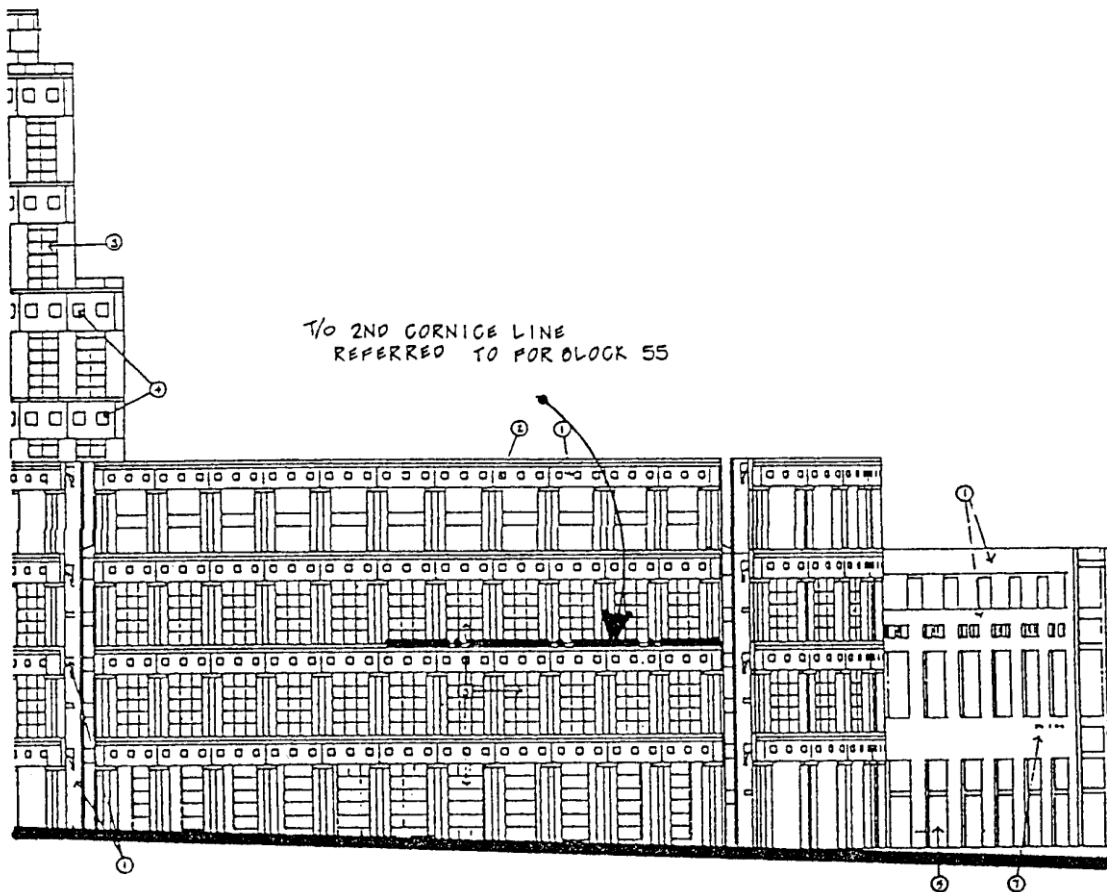
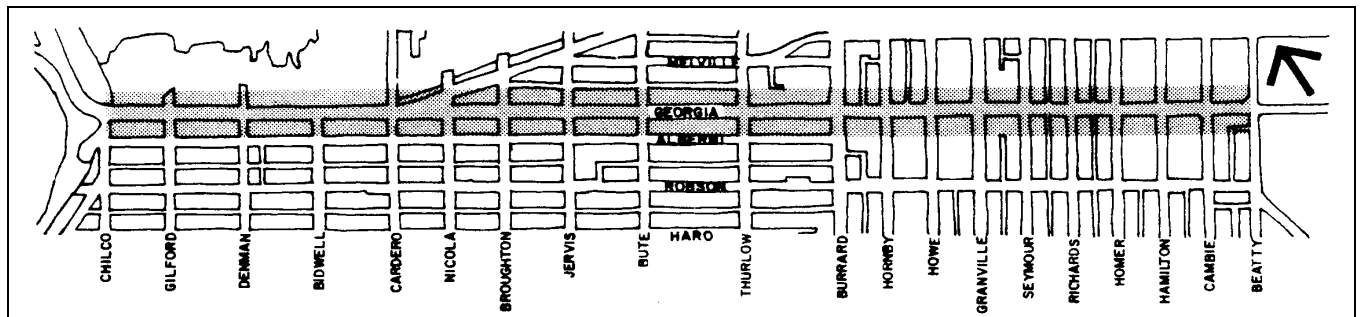


Figure 11. Partial Homer Street Elevation



Part B

1 Existing Character Area G - Georgia Street



This Georgia Street Character Area description applies to all of Georgia Street in the Downtown peninsula from Chilco Street in the west, to Beatty Street in the east. West of Cardero Street, Georgia Street is located in the West End and RM-6 zoning districts. East of Cardero Street, Georgia Street is located in the Downtown zoning district.

This Character Area description sets out development objectives applicable to all of the Georgia Street Character Area. The development objectives may apply to private development sites as well as streets and property in the public domain.

The development objectives should be considered within the context of the West End and RM-6 District Schedules and applicable planning policies and design guidelines or the Downtown District Official Development Plan By-law and the Downtown planning policies and design guidelines. In addition, consideration should be given to the Central Area Pedestrian Weather Protection planning policies and design guidelines.

1.1 Introduction

Georgia Street, on the Downtown Peninsula, is Vancouver's most important prestigious and ceremonial street. It stretches from Stanley Park in the west to the Georgia Viaduct and B.C. Place in the east. Both the west end and the east end of the street form "Gateways" to the downtown. The west end forms a gateway from Stanley Park and the North Shore beyond. The east end forms a gateway when entering the downtown via the Georgia Viaduct.

The street is a wide, major traffic route along its whole length. Prestigious buildings, significant public institutions, major public open spaces and cultural facilities are located along the street.

Notwithstanding the overall image and character of Georgia Street, the street undergoes some character changes along its length. These changes are identified in five sub-areas. They range from the West End, with the influence of Stanley Park and the surrounding West End residential district; to the downtown centre with the major office developments; hotels and departments stores; and to the predominantly large-scale institutional uses and cultural facilities at the east end of the street. Supplementary development objectives are identified where considered specifically appropriate for any individual sub-area.

1.2 Development Objectives

The purpose of the following development objectives is to provide guidance and directions for the development of the Character Area. However, there is an emphasis on the opportunity for architects and developers to be flexible and creative. The development objectives are applicable to the whole of the Georgia Street Character Area, however they should be considered in conjunction with any specific supplementary development objectives identified in each of the five Georgia Street sub-areas, and depending upon location, the West End and RM-6 District Schedules and applicable planning policies and design guidelines or the Downtown District Official Development Plan By-law and the Downtown planning policies and design guidelines. In addition, consideration should be given to the Central Area Pedestrian Weather Protection planning policies and design guidelines.

The West End Georgia/Alberni Guidelines provide more detailed direction between Cardero and Chilco and should take precedence.

1.2.1 Image and Character

These development objectives are to reinforce the dominant prestigious, ceremonial image and character of Georgia Street. It is a wide, tree-lined street with major buildings. New developments should contribute to and enhance this image of the street. It is important to maintain a human scale relationship by ensuring that the street not generally exceed the present 99 ft. width. In addition, the street should maintain the existing two-way traffic function to reinforce and enhance the street's west-east and east-west relationships.

- (a) Reinforce the existing dominant processional and formal character of the whole of Georgia Street;
- (b) Maintain two-way traffic on Georgia Street.

1.2.2 Views

The significant views obtainable from much of Georgia Street are an important component of the image of downtown. The views include Stanley Park, Lost Lagoon, Burrard Inlet and the North Shore mountains. It is important, both for now and as a future legacy, to preserve and enhance all existing views from the street ends by ensuring that physical elements do not protrude into the view cones.

A balance should also be achieved between respecting views from existing residential developments and creating views from any new residential developments.

- (a) Preserve the existing street end views of the North Shore, North Shore mountains, Burrard Inlet, and Stanley Park;
- (b) Seek a reasonable balance between respecting existing residential views and providing views for new developments.

1.2.3 Street Definition and Visual Interest

It is a development objective to create a strong unified image for the whole of Georgia Street. Defining the street edge will help create this image. In addition, private developments can assist in contributing to the character of the public areas of the street.

- (a) Ensure that all developments contribute to defining the street edge along Georgia Street through building elements and/or landscaping (i.e. plant material);
- (b) Provide visual interest appropriate for pedestrians and motorists at the lower levels of buildings along Georgia Street; and
- (c) Create a coherent high-quality environment within the public realm. Ensure that all new developments contribute to creating this high-quality street environment, by providing elements such as street trees, decorative lighting, appropriate incandescent and colour-corrected lighting, banners, displays, decorative paving materials, and a variety of street furniture.

1.2.4 Pedestrians

To contribute to the livability and enjoyment of the downtown, it is an objective to provide major amenities for pedestrians. At present, pedestrian volumes vary along Georgia Street: high volumes occur in the centre, focussing on the Georgia/Granville Street intersection; and lower volumes occur at the west and east ends of the street.

As redevelopment occurs, pedestrian volumes will increase. New developments should accommodate the existing and increasing pedestrian volumes by providing appropriate amenities and facilities. In the downtown centre, weather protection is of special importance.

- (a) Provide major amenities in new developments such as weather protection, wider sidewalks, decorative paving, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, signs and ground floor facade treatment, paying particular attention to the existing and potential pedestrian movement in each sub-area.

1.2.5 Landscaping and Open Space

Vancouver's temperate climate particularly favours plant life. Recognizing this asset, it is an important design and amenity objective to encourage the provision of open, usable, green spaces in major developments; and to complement this objective with a significant street tree planting program in the public realm.

- (a) Provide for significant green spaces in all major developments, as a "greening" concept. The green spaces should be located at elevations close to the street; be visually prominent from Georgia Street; have regard to the local environment; accommodate a variety of small-scale "people" activities; and contain an abundance of formal planting;
- (b) Pursue significant street-tree planting as a principal element for Georgia Street. The trees should generally reinforce and enhance the character of each sub-area and:
 - (i) be of appropriate species, size and scale, so as to be a significant feature;
 - (ii) be spaced appropriately in single or double rows to create the desired experience and prominence appropriate to each sub-area. For double rows, one row would be located on adjoining private property;
 - (iii) be planted in the ground in preference to at-grade containers;
 - (iv) not block significant views of the water or mountains.

1.2.6 Vehicular

Georgia Street has a vital role as a major traffic route. Provided that two-way traffic is maintained, the traffic movement patterns complement the ceremonial image of Georgia Street. However any service function of the street should be de-emphasized.

- (a) Discourage vehicular access from Georgia Street and locate vehicular entrances away from Georgia Street wherever another reasonable entrance is possible;
- (b) Discourage surface parking areas at street level;
- (c) Minimize the visual impact of any potential protrusion above the Georgia Street level of below-grade parking garages;
- (d) Discourage vehicular lay-bys in sidewalks on Georgia Street.

1.2.7 Building Elements

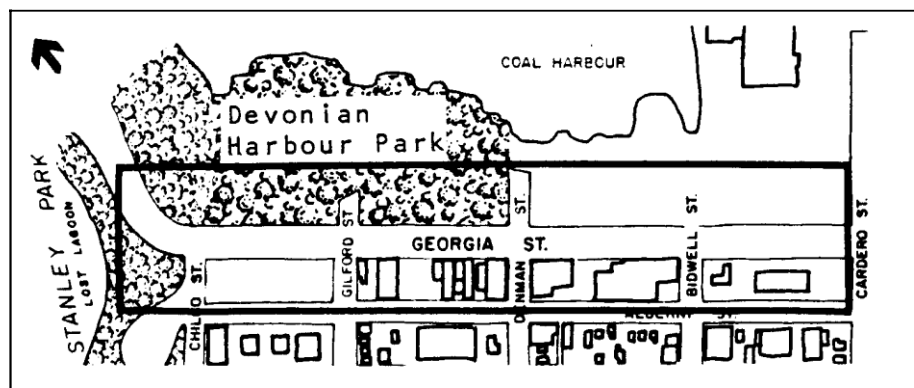
Building elements are an important component of the Georgia Street development objectives. The design of any building must contribute to the special characteristics of its particular location and respond to any emphasis on the pedestrian environment.

- (a) Ensure that all buildings orient their major building elements to Georgia Street;
- (b) Ensure that the treatment and articulation of lower floors of buildings reflect the scale and character of the adjacent street environment, as indicated in the “street definition and visual interest” development objectives;
- (c) Ensure that the building elements contribute to reinforcing the street definition;
- (d) Encourage the development of interesting roof outlines to contribute to the overall downtown skyline;
- (e) Ensure that shadows cast on any public or semi-public open space are minimized. Of particular concern are the shadows cast on any adjacent open spaces or on opposite sidewalks between the Spring and Fall equinoxes (March 21 and September 21) between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. (local time);
- (f) Minimize the adverse effect on pedestrian areas caused by the impact of new developments on wind conditions and the micro climate.

1.2.8 Special Opportunities

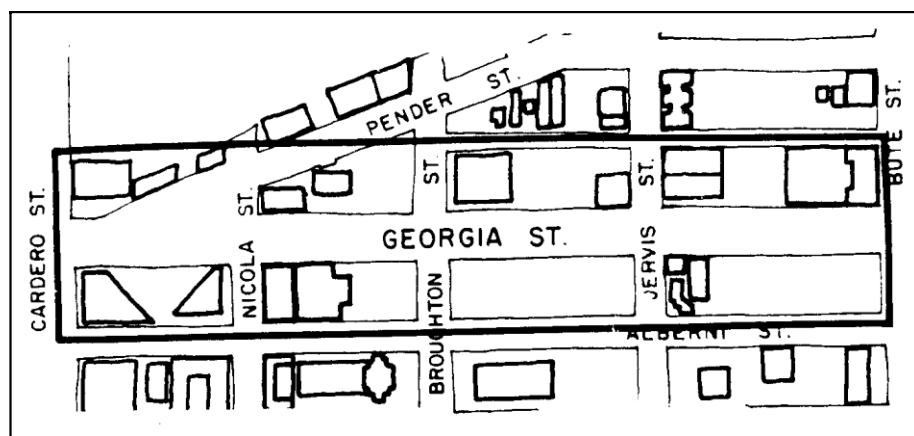
- (a) Heritage
Ensure that the design of any new buildings are particularly sensitive in relationship to any nearby or adjacent buildings of architectural or heritage merit.
- (b) Cultural and Related Uses
Encourage the provision of cultural uses at street level in new developments on Georgia Street to optimize the use of street-level development space for pedestrian related activities.
- (c) Further Study
 - (i) Develop a formal and significant street program which recognizes the importance of trees as a principal element for Georgia Street, having regard to Section 1.2.5(b) of these development objectives;
 - (ii) Determine those areas where cycling opportunities and facilities are appropriate for the development objectives of each sub-area. Determine an appropriate joint City/Developer partnership to achieve the cycling opportunities and facilities;
 - (iii) Develop an appropriate set of criteria to enable an assessment of how individual buildings may affect existing wind conditions and the micro-climate on the street environment and any nearby pedestrian areas;
 - (iv) Develop methods to encourage the provision of cultural uses at street level on Georgia Street, including the provision of incentives.

1.3 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 1: Chilco-Cardero



Refer to West End Georgia/Alberni Guidelines

1.4 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 2: Cardero-Bute



The easterly visual impact of this sub-area is that of approaching the downtown, with the long view being of major office buildings. To the west, the visual impact is of leaving the downtown, with long views of Stanley Park and West End apartment buildings.

This section of Georgia Street lacks a sense of street definition because not only are there a number of vacant redevelopment sites, but the existing buildings are well spaced. This tends, at this time, to give a semi-open feeling to the sub-area.

1.4.1 Image Character

- (a) Reinforce the sense of approach from the West End district to the Downtown District. This approach is accentuated by a major topographical change;
- (b) Develop a commercial/residential mixed-use character.

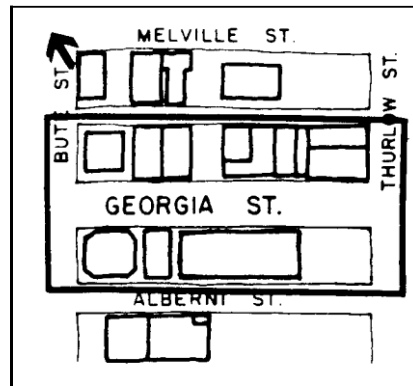
1.4.2 Pedestrians

- (a) Provide for the anticipated increase in pedestrian movement in this sub-area along Georgia Street, to the West End and the waterfront.

1.4.3 Special Opportunities for Further Study

- (a) Investigate the opportunity of removing the existing lay-by in the 1500 Block Georgia Street, having regard to the objectives of the “greening” concept.

1.5 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 3: Bute-Thurlow



This sub-area is limited to one block which creates a significant gateway at Bute Street. When entering or leaving the downtown centre, the gateway is accentuated by the elevation change of Georgia Street, with this block being the higher elevation. To the east there are long views of the downtown centre, and to the west there are long views of Stanley Park, the North Shore mountains and the West End apartment buildings.

Many of the buildings in this sub-area are only one or two storeys high. These buildings, together with other sites including that of the former art gallery, have a significant redevelopment potential. The existing buildings on both sides of the street in this sub-area provide a strong sense of enclosure. This is reinforced by the street trees which are visually prominent in relation to the scale of existing buildings.

1.5.1 Image and Character

- (a) Reinforce the sense of arrival at downtown from the west end of Georgia Street.

1.5.2 Street Definition and Visual Interest

- (a) Emphasize the use of major building elements in reinforcing a sense of visual definition of street enclosure.

1.5.3 Pedestrians

- (a) Provide for the anticipated increase of pedestrian movement and related activity from Thurlow Street to Bute Street to link with the emerging major north-south pedestrian route to the waterfront;
- (b) Provide for a diversity of pedestrian activity at the street level.

1.6 Supplementary Development Objectives For Sub-Area 4: Thurlow-Seymour



The visual experience of this sub-area is of being downtown, with major office buildings, department stores, hotels, public buildings such as the Art Gallery, and Christ Church Cathedral. In this sub-area Georgia Street also intersects with two other significant streets, namely, Burrard Street and Granville Street.

There is a strong sense of enclosure at this part of Georgia Street, created by the existing buildings. The sub-area is fully developed except for two redevelopment sites, formerly the Hotel Devonshire and the Ritz Hotel. The Old Courthouse Square provides an important formal multi-use public open space and a major visual focus.

As the downtown centre, pedestrian volumes on Georgia Street are high. There is a diversity of pedestrian-related activity, and a series of pedestrian nodes at the intersection of Georgia Street with all the north-south streets in this sub-area.

1.6.1 Image and Character

- (a) Reinforce the image of being in the prestigious centre of downtown.

1.6.2 Street Definition, Visual Interest

- (a) Emphasize the use of major building elements in reinforcing a sense of visual definition of street enclosure;
- (b) Provide a strong sense of street definition to signify the importance of the two intersections of Georgia Street with Granville Street and Burrard Street.

1.6.3 Pedestrians

- (a) Reinforce the existing diversity and intensity of pedestrian activities.

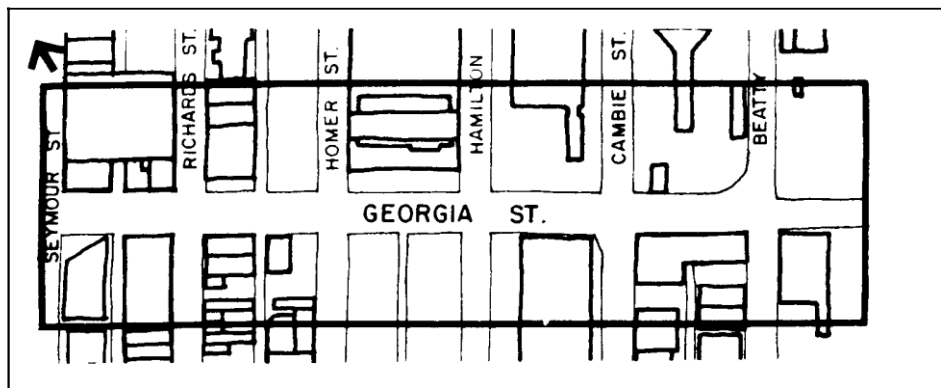
1.6.4 Landscaping and Open Space

- (a) Reinforce and enhance the Old Courthouse Square as a public, pedestrian area on Georgia Street. Ensure that new developments on the periphery of the square reflect and enhance the special characteristics of this open space and contribute to reinforcing a sense of enclosure.

1.6.5 Special Opportunities For Further Study

- (a) Investigate the opportunity of removing the existing lay-by in the 1000 Block Georgia Street, having regard to the objectives of the “greening” concept.

1.7 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 5: Seymour-Beatty



The easterly visual impact of this sub-area is that of leaving the downtown centre, with a long view of the openness of Georgia Viaduct. The westerly visual impact is of approaching the downtown centre, with views of major office buildings, Hudson's Bay store and the Hotel Vancouver.

Along Georgia Street there are major institutional buildings with open forecourts. They dominate the eastern portion of the sub-area, particularly on the north side of Georgia Street. On the south side, the development of Library Square provides a large, public open space at the corner of Georgia and Homer Streets. Library Square will generate greater pedestrian volumes along Georgia Street as it is a major public institution.

Pedestrian volumes are low and there are few pedestrian amenities and activities.

Of major consequence for this sub-area is the visual relationship to the downtown centre, Library Square, and False Creek North. This relationship is significantly influenced by the form and nature of the Library Square and False Creek North developments.

1.7.1 Image and Character

- (a) Create a gateway transition between the Georgia Viaduct/B.C. Place/Beatty Street and the downtown.

1.7.2 Views

- (a) Provide a significant visual terminus for the east end of Georgia Street.

1.7.3 Pedestrians

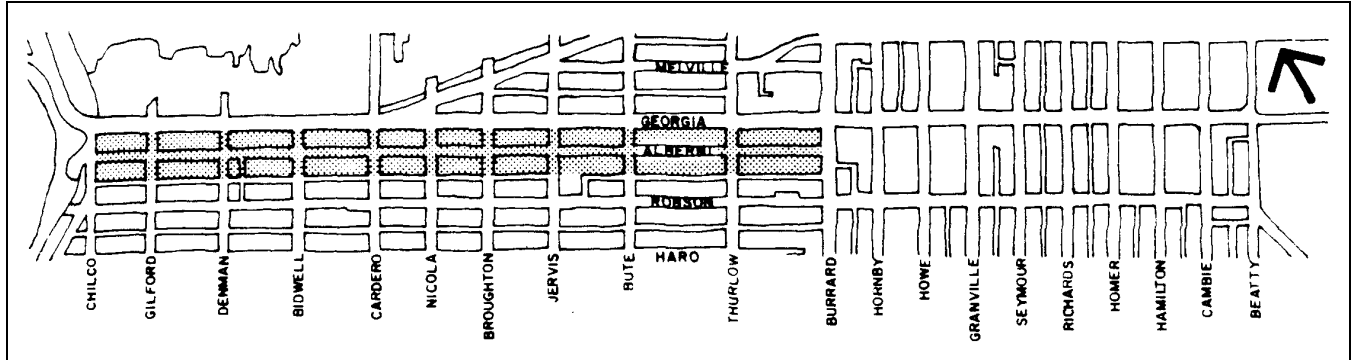
- (a) Provide for the significant increase in the volume of pedestrians along Georgia Street to the Stadium;
- (b) Provide for major pedestrian linkages to B.C. Place; and
- (c) Enhance the pedestrian and visual linkage from Library Square to Victory Square.

1.7.4 Open Space

- (a) Provide for a boulevard on the north side of Georgia Street between Richards Street and Beatty Street. New development should align to the face of the 401 West Georgia development (the freestanding beam). The boulevard should accommodate increased pedestrian movement, enhance pedestrian amenity, and provide a formal linkage to Library Square, False Creek North, and the stadium;
- (b) Recognize the importance of the Queen Elizabeth Theatre plaza as a public open space. Improve the visual appearance and functional use of this plaza in relation to Georgia Street;

- (c) Recognize the importance of the Library Square plaza on the south side of Georgia Street as a public open space;
- (d) Consider the provision of public open space on the south side of Georgia Street between Homer and Hamilton Streets (Block 56); and
- (e) Create a public open space on the south side of Georgia Street (Library Square) and a continuous linear open space on the west side of Homer Street (Block 55).

2 Existing Character Area H - Alberni Street



2.1 Introduction

The following Character Area description sets out development objectives that are applicable to the whole of the Alberni Street Character Area. There are no sub-areas. These development objectives may apply to private development sites as well as streets and property in the public domain.

West of Cardero Street, Alberni Street is located in the West End, RM-5B, RM-5C and RM-6 zoning districts. East of Cardero Street, Alberni Street is located in the Downtown zoning district.

The development objectives should be considered with the context of applicable West End district schedules, planning policies and design guidelines or the Downtown District Official Development Plan By-law and the Downtown planning policies and guidelines. In addition, consideration should be given to the Central Area Pedestrian Weather Protection planning policies and design guidelines.

Alberni Street is of indeterminate character. The western end has mixed retail/commercial and residential uses and a substantial number of vacant redevelopment sites. The eastern end is in the downtown centre and also has a substantial number of vacant redevelopment sites. The entire street has a mixed-use residential/commercial potential. The street has neither the dominance and formality of Georgia Street, nor the local, informal, pedestrian orientation of Robson Street. An objective for Alberni Street is to provide a sense of visual transition between Georgia and Robson Streets.

A significant emerging role for Alberni Street is that of a major automobile arterial. This role will expand as changes in downtown traffic patterns become more established. While the street will develop as a significant automobile route, there should also be recognition of and provision for the emerging role of Alberni Street as a pedestrian route.

Development sites on the north side of Alberni Street front directly onto Georgia Street. No lanes intervene. This creates a tendency for the north side of Alberni Street to be developed as a secondary frontage, with service facilities. While this is recognized, it is important that developments also provide appropriate frontages to Alberni Street.

Development sites on the south side of Alberni Street back onto a City lane. This means that developments on the south side can appropriately front Alberni Street.

The **West End Georgia/Alberni Guidelines** provide more detailed direction for Alberni Street between Cardero and Chilco and should take precedence.

2.2 Development Objectives

The purpose of the following development objectives is to provide guidance and directions for the development of this Character Area. However, there is an emphasis on the opportunity for architects and developers to be flexible and creative. The following development objectives specifically relate to Alberni Street. However, as Alberni Street is located between Georgia Street and Robson Street, the development objectives should also be considered in relationship with the Georgia Street and the Robson Street Character Areas, including their sub-areas.

2.2.1 Image and Character

- (a) Provide a sense of image transition between the formality of Georgia Street and the informal, local scale character of Robson Street;
- (b) Develop a commercial/mixed-use character.

2.2.2 Views

- (a) Preserve and enhance the existing street end views of the North Shore, North Shore mountains, Burrard Inlet, and Stanley Park;
- (b) Seek a reasonable balance between respecting existing residential views and providing views for new residential developments.

2.2.3 Street Definition and Visual Interest

- (a) Provide a sense of visual interest and street definition to existing or new developments, particularly at the lower levels;
- (b) Ensure the appropriate treatment of service areas and loading/unloading facilities to complement visual interest objectives.

2.2.4 Pedestrians

- (a) Provide for the potential increase in the number of pedestrians on Alberni Street as redevelopment occurs;
- (b) Encourage the provision of pedestrian movement across the lane south of Alberni Street between Alberni Street and Robson Street in the 1000 and 1100 Blocks.

2.2.5 Landscaping and Open Space

- (a) Pursue significant street-tree planting as a principal element for Alberni Street. The trees should generally:
 - (i) be of appropriate species, size and scale, so as to be a significant feature;
 - (ii) be spaced appropriately in single or double rows to create the desired experience and appropriate prominence. For double rows, one row would be located on adjoining private property;
 - (iii) be planted in the ground in preference to at-grade containers;
 - (iv) not block significant views of the water or mountains;
- (b) Emphasize the use of landscaping (plant material) when developing both the public and private realms along the street;
- (c) Provide public open spaces with good sunlight access on the north side of Alberni Street.

2.2.6 Vehicular

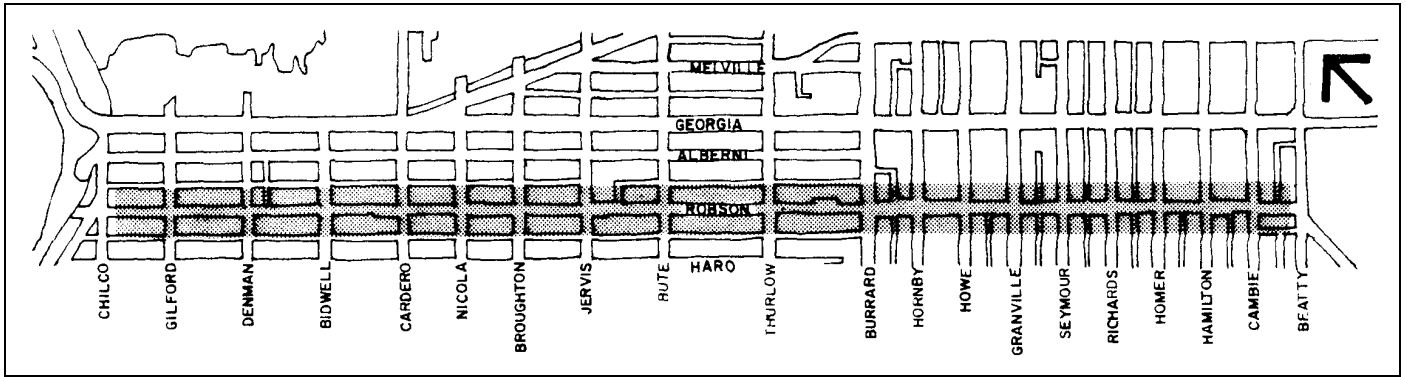
- (a) Ensure that any protrusions of parking structures above street level are appropriately treated to achieve pedestrian scale and interest;
- (b) Recognize the role of Alberni Street east of Denman Street, as that of a major east/west automobile arterial;

- (c) Recognize the additional role of the street to accommodate a service function for Georgia Street in the absence of a lane.

2.2.7 Building Elements

- (a) Ensure that building elements, particularly those at the lower levels facing the street, are appropriately designed and treated to provide a human-scale relationship.

3 Existing Character Area N - Robson Street



This Robson Street Character Area description applies to all of Robson Street on the Downtown peninsula from Chilco Street in the west, to Beatty Street in the East except the south side of Robson between the lanes west and east of Granville Street. The **Granville Street (Downtown South) Guidelines** refer to this section of Robson Street. West of Jervis Street, Robson Street is located in the C-5, C-6 and RM-5B zoning districts. East of Jervis Street, Robson is located in the Downtown zoning district.

This Character Area description sets out development objectives applicable to all of the Robson Street Character Area. The development objectives may apply to private development sites as well as streets and property in the public domain.

The development objectives should be considered with the context of the C-5, C-6 and RM-5B District Schedules and applicable planning policies and design guidelines or the Downtown District Official Development Plan By-law and the Downtown planning policies and design guidelines. In addition, consideration should be given to the Central Area Pedestrian Weather Protection planning policies and design guidelines.

3.1 Introduction

Robson Street runs parallel to Georgia Street and stretches from Stanley Park in the west to Beatty Street and the B.C. Place Stadium in the east. The street has a significant informal pedestrian orientation and a number of strong local neighbourhood identities identified as sub-areas. While the character of each sub-area is distinct, collectively the sub-areas contribute to the overall image of the street.

The overall image and character of Robson Street is created by the informal nature of existing developments; the emphasis on pedestrian movement and activities; and the significant volume of small-scale retailing at various shopping nodes. East of Burrard Street, Robson Street is of increasing importance as the major downtown pedestrian route to the Stadium.

Notwithstanding the overall image and character of Robson Street, the street changes its nature at differing locations. These changes are identified in six sub-areas. They range from a significant residential area in the West End, which is influenced by Stanley Park; to the downtown “Robson Street” centre, which comprises three blocks of small-scale, pedestrian-oriented specialty stores, eateries and restaurants; and to the largely undeveloped east end of Robson Street as it approaches

the Stadium and the future B.C. Place development. Supplementary development objectives are identified where considered specifically appropriate for any individual sub-area.

Between the lanes west and east of Granville Street, also refer to the **Granville Street (Downtown South) Guidelines**.

3.2 Development Objectives

The purpose of the following development objectives is to provide guidance and directions for the development of this Character Area. However, there is an emphasis on the opportunity for architects and developers to be flexible and creative. While the development objectives are applicable to the whole of the Robson Street Character Area, they should be considered in conjunction with any supplementary development objectives identified in each of the six Robson Street sub-areas. These six distinct sub-areas are of significance in creating the overall image of Robson Street. In addition, the development objectives should be considered within the context of the C-5, C-6 and RM-5B District Schedules and applicable planning policies and design guidelines or the Downtown District Official Development Plan By-law and the Downtown planning policies and design guidelines. Consideration should also be given to the Central Area Pedestrian Weather Protection planning policies and design guidelines.

3.2.1 Image and Character

The following objectives are to reinforce and enhance the local smaller-neighbourhood character of Robson Street. It is important that new developments contribute to the street's informality and intimate human scale characteristics.

3.2.2 Views

There are views of Stanley Park, the water and the North Shore mountains from various sub-areas on Robson Street. While existing street-end views are not as visually prominent as from Georgia Street, they should be preserved by ensuring that physical elements do not protrude into the view cone.

With the significant residential use potential along Robson Street, efforts should be made to balance the impact of new developments on existing residential views.

- (a) Preserve the existing street-end views of Stanley Park, the North Shore and Burrard Inlet;
- (b) Seek a reasonable balance between respecting existing residential views and providing views for new developments.

3.2.3 Street Definition and Visual Image

It is a development objective to reinforce the informal character of Robson Street. A sense of street enclosure created by defining the street edge will assist in achieving this development objective. In addition, private developments can also assist in contributing to the character of the public areas of the street.

- (a) Ensure that all developments contribute to creating a sense of street enclosure, particularly at the lower levels through buildings and/or landscaping (plant materials);
- (b) Create a high-quality environment within the public realm having regard to the individual characteristics of each sub-area. Ensure that all new developments contribute to creating this high-quality street environment by providing elements such as street trees, decorative lighting, appropriate incandescent and colour-corrected lighting, banners, displays, decorative paving materials and a variety of street furniture.

3.2.4 Pedestrians

Major pedestrian amenities should be provided which will contribute to Robson Street's livability, informality and enjoyability.

Pedestrian volumes are generally greater along Robson Street than in surrounding areas. As redevelopment occurs both along Robson Street and particularly in the surrounding areas, pedestrian volumes will increase. This is of particular significance in the eastern part of Robson Street which is a major pedestrian route to the Stadium.

An important development objective is to provide appropriate amenities and facilities for the existing and increasing number of pedestrians.

- (a) Provide amenities in new developments such as weather protections, wider sidewalks, decorative paving, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, signs and ground floor facade treatment, and pay particular attention to the existing and potential pedestrian movement in each sub-area.

3.2.5 Landscaping and Open Space

Vancouver's temperate climate particularly favours plant life. Recognizing this asset, the provision of landscaping (plant materials) is encouraged in appropriate locations on Robson Street. A significant tree planting program should be undertaken in the public realm.

- (a) Pursue significant street-tree planting as a principal element for Robson Street. The trees should generally reinforce and enhance the character of each sub-area and:
 - (i) be of appropriate species, size and scale, so as to be a significant feature;
 - (ii) be spaced appropriately in single or double rows to create the desired experience and prominence appropriate to each sub-area. For double rows, one row would be located on adjoining private property;
 - (iii) be planted in the ground in preference to at-grade containers;
 - (iv) not block significant views of the water or mountains;
 - (v) be appropriately located to minimize pedestrian obstruction;
- (b) Encourage the provision of appropriate interim landscape treatment along the street frontages of vacant sites to contribute to achieving a high-quality pedestrian experience.

3.2.6 Vehicular

With the change in traffic movement patterns arising from the alignment of the north end of Cambie Street; Robson Street is expected to acquire a greater pedestrian emphasis particularly, at the eastern end of the street. It is important for the pedestrian character of the street that two-way traffic be maintained or provided along the length of the character area. The following objectives are concerned with enhancing the Robson Street pedestrian environment.

- (a) Discourage off-street surface parking areas at street level;
- (b) Reinforce pedestrian continuity along Robson Street. Vehicular access should be other than from Robson Street.

3.2.7 Building Elements

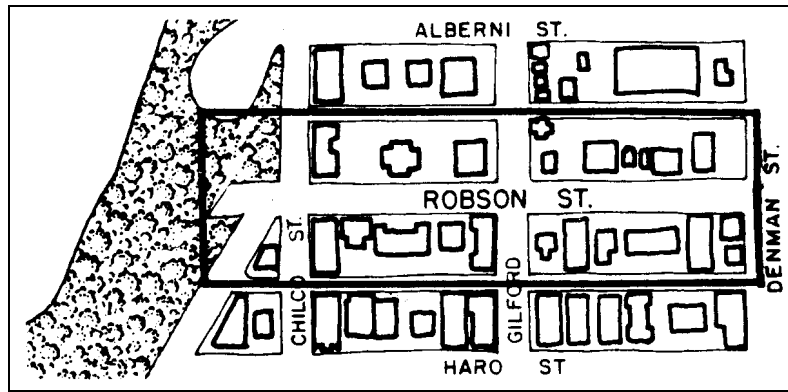
Building elements are an important component of the Robson Street development objectives. The design of any building should contribute to the special characteristics of its particular location and respond to the particular emphasis of pedestrian environment.

- (a) Ensure that all buildings orient their major building elements, including entrances and storefronts, to Robson Street;
- (b) Ensure that the treatment and articulation of the lower floors of buildings are of human scale and relate to pedestrians;
- (c) Encourage the development of interesting roof outlines to contribute to the overall downtown skyline;
- (d) Retain the 7 ft. building line which exists on the north and south sides of Robson Street, with the primary purpose of allowing for the eventual widening of the sidewalks;
- (e) Encourage the interim use of the setback areas for people-oriented facilities to reinforce the retail/commercial activity along Robson Street;
- (f) Ensure that the shadows cast on any public or semi-public open space are minimized. Of particular concern are the shadows cast on any adjacent open spaces or on opposite sidewalks between the Spring and Fall Equinoxes (March 21 and September 21) between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. (local time);
- (g) Minimize adverse effect on pedestrian areas caused by the impact of new developments on wind conditions and the micro-climate.

3.2.8 Special Opportunities

- (a) Heritage
Ensure that the design of new buildings are particularly sensitive in relationship to any nearby or adjacent buildings of architectural or heritage merit.
- (b) Signs and Advertising
 - (i) Pursue opportunities for appropriate signs to contribute to and reinforce the special characteristics of each sub-area;
 - (ii) Encourage the provision of signs, particularly on Robson Street, that will add to the sense of vitality and liveliness in the Downtown.
- (c) Further Study
 - (i) Develop a formal and significant street tree program which recognizes the importance of trees as a principal element for Robson Street, having regard to Section 3.2.5(a) of these development objectives;
 - (ii) Determine those areas where cycling opportunities and facilities are appropriate for the development objectives of each sub-area. Determine an appropriate joint City/Developer partnership to achieve the cycling opportunities and facilities;
 - (iii) Develop an appropriate set of criteria to enable an assessment of how individual buildings may affect existing wind conditions and the micro-climate on the street environment and any nearby pedestrian areas.

3.3 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 1: Chilco-Denman



This sub-area is well developed, and predominantly residential in character. The front gardens, landscaping and trees all create a sense of street enclosure and enhance the sub-area as a pleasant residential and pedestrian neighbourhood. There are both high-rise and low-rise apartment buildings. There appears only limited redevelopment potential.

The sub-area has a strong visual linkage with nearby Stanley Park. There are also north street-end views of the waterfront. These views, together with the mature landscaping along the street, provide significant pedestrian interest.

3.3.1 Image and Character

- (a) Reinforce the predominant residential character and environment of this area;
- (b) Ensure that the existing visual linkage with nearby Stanley Park is maintained.

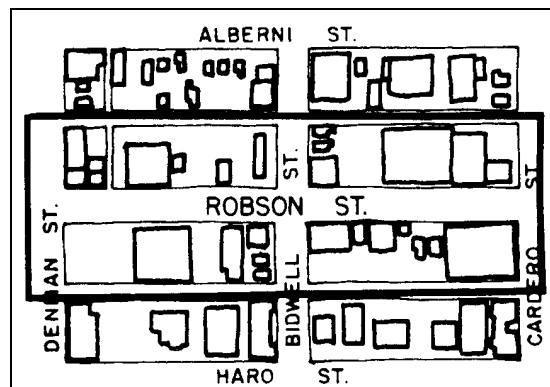
3.3.2 Street Definition and Visual Interest

- (a) Reinforce the existing elements of visual interest primarily created by landscaping (plant materials).

3.3.3 Landscaping

- (a) Recognize the importance of retaining the existing mature landscaping (plant material), including that of the significant mature trees: ensure that all landscaping (plant materials) in new developments complements the existing plant materials, and also relates to that of nearby Stanley Park;
- (b) Recognize the existing stone walls as a significant landscape feature.

3.4 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 2: Denman-Cardero



This sub-area is primarily a commercial area with a strong neighbourhood character, with the retail stores catering primarily to the surrounding West End residents. It is a special activity node and is enhanced by significant pedestrian volumes and activities.

The existing buildings are generally developed to a local scale and contribute to street definition. There are several vacant sites indicating redevelopment potential.

Major elements of visual interest and a significant number of activities exist at the street level. However, the street lacks physical pedestrian amenities such as weather protection, and existing landscaping is generally inadequate and of poor quality.

3.4.1 Image and Character

- (a) Reinforce the existing local shopping character of this area.

3.4.2 Street Definition and Visual Interest

- (a) Reinforce the existing elements of visual interest created by pedestrian activities associated with the local area shopping facilities.

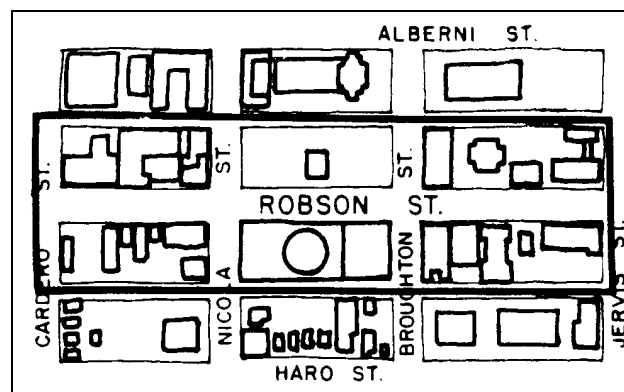
3.4.3 Pedestrians

- (a) Provide for a diversity of pedestrian activities at street level.

3.4.4 Landscaping and Open Space

- (a) Provide an abundance of landscaping (plant materials) to complement the local shopping area environment.

3.5 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 3: Cardero-Jervis



This sub-area is a mixed-use commercial area but without the strong local neighbourhood character found in Sub-area 2. Hotels and restaurants are prominent at street level.

In this sub-area Robson Street undergoes a significant change in elevation, rising from Cardero Street to Jervis Street. In this section of the street the existing developments provide a sense of enclosure, however the built forms are generally incompatible and do not contribute to visual coherence, particularly the Sheraton Landmark Hotel.

Pedestrian volumes are not significant and pedestrian amenities and elements of visual interest are limited. Landscaping in both the public and private realm is generally undeveloped.

3.5.1 Image and Character

- (a) Reinforce the existing predominantly mixed-use character (residential/hotel/restaurant) of this sub-area;
- (b) Reinforce the sense of approach from the West End district to the Robson Street downtown shopping area. This approach is accentuated by a major topographical change.

3.5.2 Street Definition and Visual Interest

- (a) Provide elements of visual interest at the lower levels of buildings which are appropriate for pedestrians on Robson Street.

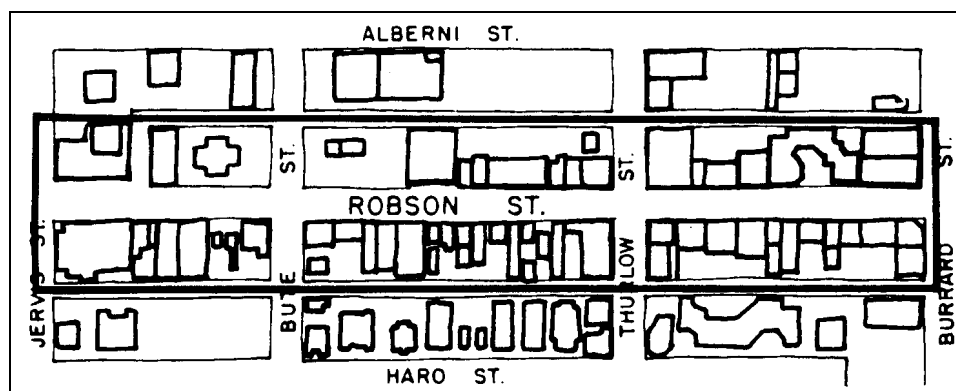
3.5.3 Pedestrians

- (a) Provide for increasing pedestrian movement linking the Robson Street downtown shopping area with the West End;
- (b) Provide for a diversity of pedestrian activities at street level.

3.5.4 Landscaping and Open Space

- (a) Provide an abundance of landscaping (plant materials) to complement this mixed-use commercial area.

3.6 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 4: Jervis-Burrard



This sub-area is the most important on-street shopping area in the Downtown centre. It is small in scale, low density, and pedestrian oriented.

The scale and character of the street creates an interesting, important pedestrian shopping route as well as a significant link between the residential West End and the Downtown centre.

The built form, comprising predominantly lower-scale buildings, contrasts with the surrounding Downtown office towers and the West End high-rise apartment buildings. These lower-scale buildings together with the east-west orientation of the street allow for sunlight on the south side of the street in the morning and sunlight on the north side of the street in the afternoon.

Predominant features are the continuous retail stores and restaurants which are generally small, with narrow street frontages and of diverse design, appearance and type. Collectively they create a three block identifiable shopping sub-area. While shoppers include local residents and nearby office workers, the street also benefits from significant numbers of tourists using nearby hotels and people visiting a number of nearby educational, cultural, public institutional and entertainment facilities.

3.6.1 Image and Character

- (a) Reinforce the existing special small-scale shopping character of this area;
- (b) Reinforce the retail character of this sub-area by ensuring continuous linear retail street frontages with small stores of diverse design, and enhance the multi-cultural retail atmosphere;
- (c) Encourage the incremental redevelopment and/or renovation of existing individual buildings rather than larger-scale redevelopment;
- (d) Reinforce the developing mixed-use character with retail/ restaurant uses at the street level and residential uses above.

3.6.2 Views

- (a) Recognize the significance of the existing surrounding views of the Downtown and the West End buildings as an important backdrop to this sub-area.

3.6.3 Street Enclosure and Visual Interest

- (a) Ensure that all developments reinforce the existing strong sense and scale of street enclosure which is created primarily by major building elements, with canopies and awnings rather than by landscaping (plant materials);
- (b) Emphasize the provision of individual store canopies and awnings in providing pedestrian amenities;
- (c) Ensure that the street retail continuity has priority over access or openings along the Robson Street frontage.

3.6.4 Pedestrians

- (a) Reinforce the existing significant pedestrian movement patterns relating to shopping, and to the pedestrian routes to the Downtown and the West End;
- (b) Provide elements of visual interest at street level appropriate for pedestrians. The visual interest should emphasize small-scale “retail store-type” window displays.

3.6.5 Landscaping and Open Space

- (a) Landscaping such as street trees, hanging baskets, and window boxes should be provided to complement the continuous linear retail activity frontage and reinforce the sense of street enclosure.

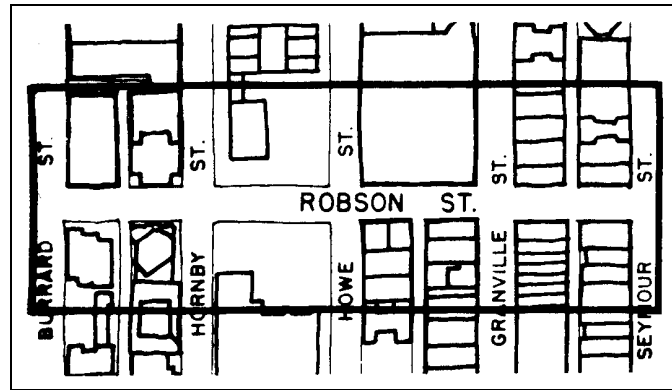
3.6.6 Vehicular

- (a) Recognize the importance of maintaining the existing two-way vehicular traffic through this sub-area in contributing to maintaining the pedestrian environment;
- (b) Ensure that all vehicular access for off-street parking and loading occur from the lanes at the rear of Robson Street to avoid interruptions to the linear retail continuity on Robson Street.

3.6.7 Building Elements

- (a) Ensure that developments along the abutting north-south flanking streets provide for the transition to the form, scale and uses along Robson Street from the residential and commercial developments in the West End and the Downtown;
- (b) Ensure that larger-scale developments achieve the objectives of small-scale retailing at the lower levels of the building as sought by the overall objectives for this sub-area.

3.7 Supplementary Development Objectives for Sub-Area 5: Burrard-Seymour



This sub-area is within the downtown centre and mostly developed with prominent, major buildings, and is predominantly commercial with retailing at street level.

A dominant feature is Robson Square, which is a public institutional use, and also provides a major downtown open space, in part, with significant landscaping (plant materials). There is also a formal landscaped plaza in front of the new Art Gallery (old courthouse building).

Throughout there is a variety of built forms that lack coherence. While these physical forms provide for street-level definition, they do not provide a strong sense of street enclosure. The street level has strong visual interest and a significant volume of pedestrians.

The eastern portion of this sub-area is underdeveloped and has redevelopment potential.

Between the lanes west and east of Granville Street, also refer to the **Granville Street (Downtown South) Guidelines**.

3.7.1 Image and Character

- (a) Reinforce the image of being within the downtown centre.

3.7.2 Views

- (a) Recognize that the old courthouse building and Robson Square provide a major visual focus for this sub-area.

3.7.3 Street Enclosure and Visual Interest

- (a) Enhance the existing visual interest by providing landscaping (plant materials) and pedestrian and retail activities at the street level of buildings;
- (b) Emphasize a strong sense of street definition so as to reinforce the importance of the intersections of Robson Street with Burrard Street and Granville Street;
- (c) Emphasize the significant retail use continuity and linkages at the intersections of Robson Street with Burrard Street and Granville Street.

3.7.4 Pedestrians

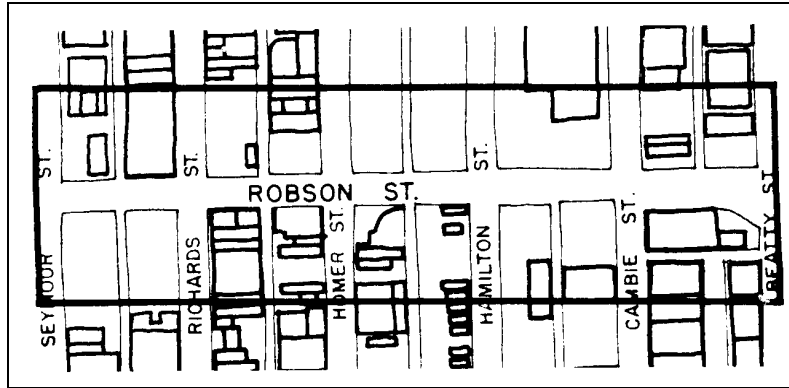
- (a) Reinforce the existing significant pedestrian movement in this sub-area and on the adjoining north-south streets;
- (b) Pursue opportunities for special pedestrian activities in the 800 Block Robson Street.

3.7.5 Landscaping and Open Space

- (a) Recognize the importance of the public open space at Robson Square;

- (b) Provide landscaping to create a stronger definition of the public open space in front of the new art gallery (the old courthouse building).

3.8 Supplementary Development Objectives For Sub-Area 6: Seymour-Beatty



This sub-area is in the process of significant change. The sense of arriving at or leaving the Downtown will significantly diminish when the north end of Cambie Street is realigned. The development of the new central public library at Library Square will introduce a major public institution along Robson Street. This development adds a unique, significant form to this street, and adds a major destination that will generate greater pedestrian activity. The Stadium creates a strong visual terminus to the east end of Robson Street. The sub-area has the potential to develop as a mixed-use area with commercial and residential uses.

At present the sub-area is mostly undeveloped and indicates a maximum potential for redevelopment. The sub-area's emerging role is as a major pedestrian route, linking the downtown to the Stadium and future B.C. Place developments.

3.8.1 Image and Character

- (a) Recognize the increasing pedestrian movement related to the stadium, False Creek North, and Library Square as an opportunity to create a strong pedestrian-oriented character area;
- (b) Develop this area as a major mixed-use (commercial/residential) area.

3.8.2 Views

- (a) Reinforce the significant visual terminus at the east end of Robson Street created by the Stadium.

3.8.3 Street Definition and Visual Interest

- (a) Provide for visual interest appropriate for pedestrians at the lower levels of buildings on Robson Street;
- (b) Ensure that all developments contribute to creating a sense of street definition to emphasize the street level view of the stadium along Robson Street and views to Library Square.

3.8.4 Pedestrian

- (a) Reinforce the role of the street as a major pedestrian corridor linking the Stadium to the downtown centre; and
- (b) Provide increased sidewalk widths to accommodate the significant pedestrian movement on both sides of Robson Street, particularly from Homer Street to Beatty Street.

3.8.5 Landscaping and Open Space

- (a) Provide an abundance of landscaping (plant materials) to enhance the pedestrian environment;
- (b) Provide a series of small, useable, human scale open spaces; and
- (c) Within the Library Precinct of the sub-area, concentrate activity at the Robson/Homer Street plaza of Library Square and the space provided on the west side of Homer Street. Within the Library Precinct, discourage the development of small plazas other than the setback area encouraged on Homer Street.

3.8.6 Vehicular

- (a) Emphasize the major pedestrian corridor focus, by recognizing the traffic role of Robson Street in this sub-area as a local secondary street rather than a major arterial.