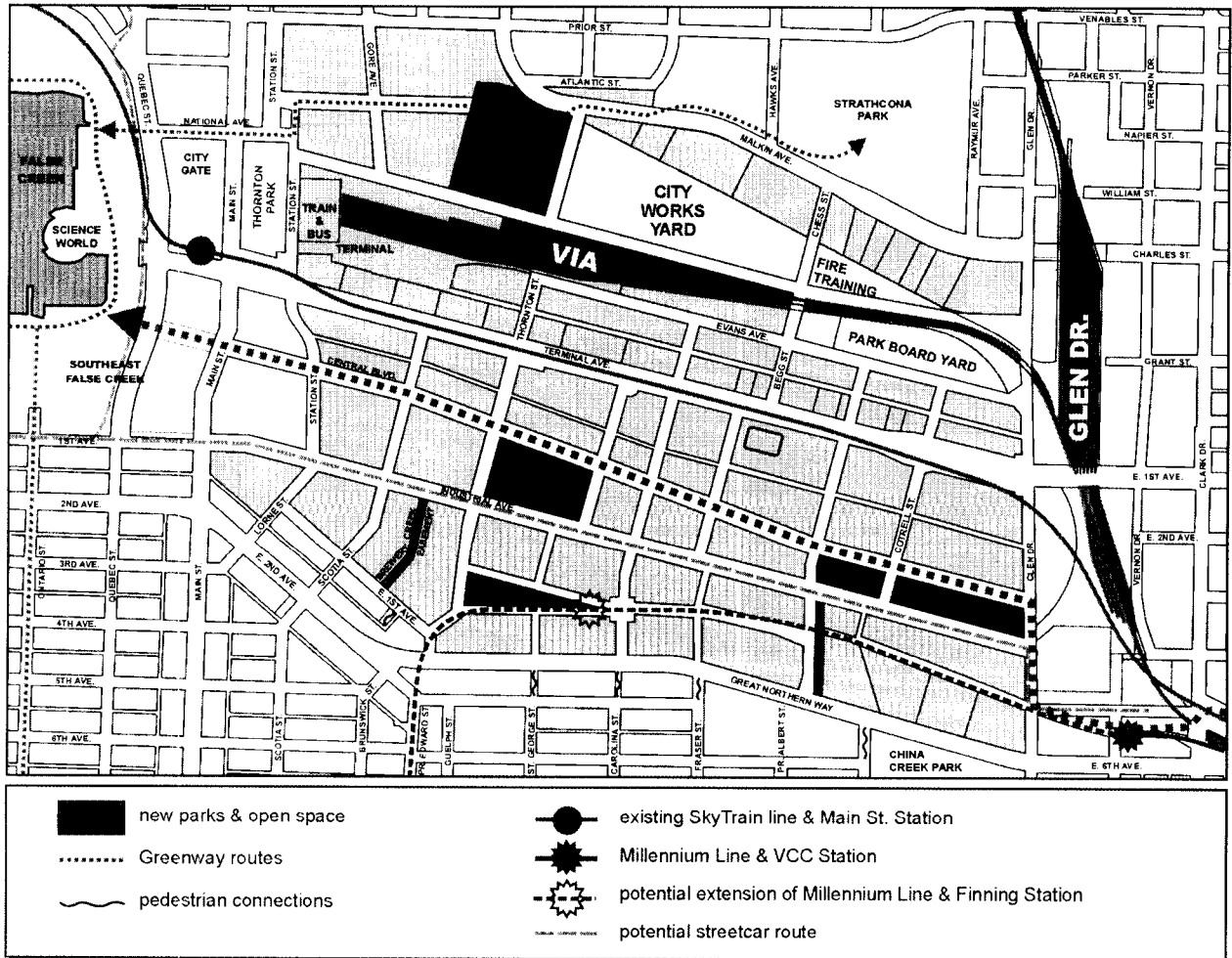


# DRAFT I-3 District Guidelines

## False Creek Flats

False Creek Flats Structure Plan – Long-range view



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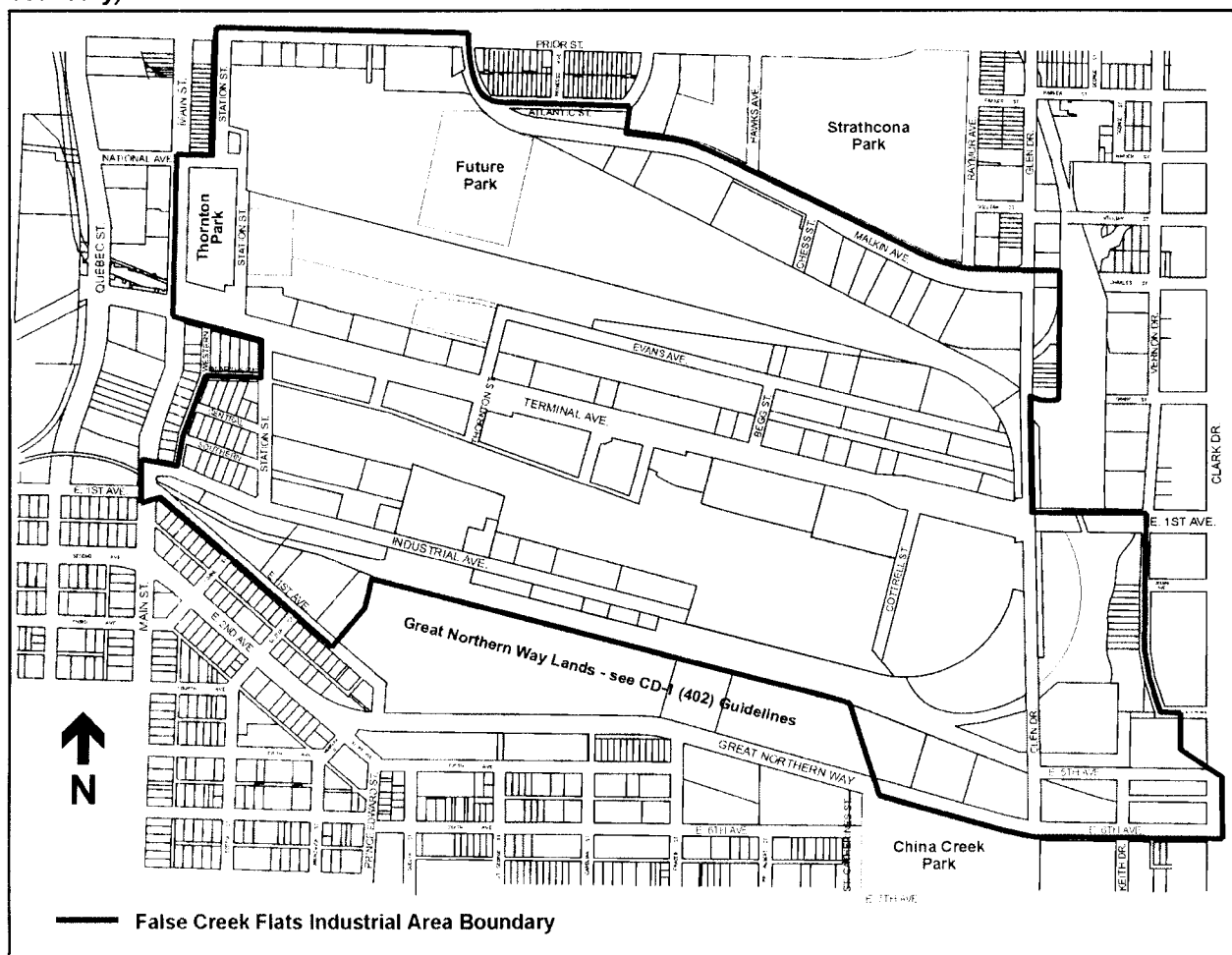
**1 Application and Intent**

The following policies and guidelines apply to all sites zoned I-3 that lie within the False Creek Flats Industrial Area, as shown in Figure 1 below.

The guidelines are to assist applicants in preparing, and staff and Council in evaluating proposed developments. The guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the False Creek Flats Structure Plan and with the I-3 District Schedule of the Zoning and Development By-law.

The intent of these guidelines is to: assist in the creation of attractive, cohesive, urban developments for high-tech industry that display a high quality of urban design and architectural expression; integrate existing and future greenways, and pedestrian and bicycle connections; and improve and enhance the quality of the public realm in the False Creek Flats.

**Figure 1 – False Creek Flats Industrial Area Boundary (guidelines apply to all sites zoned I-3 within this boundary)**



## **2 General Design Considerations**

### **2.1 Neighbourhood Character**

Formerly a tidal mud flat, the False Creek Flats was filled early in the 20th century to accommodate Vancouver's burgeoning rail industry. Today, it is a wide, open area of about 120 hectares (300 acres) that continues to serve the railways and conventional industries involved in warehousing and transshipment, however these uses have been in decline since the 1970s. Many properties now lay vacant. Land parcels vary considerably in size and configuration, and, due to the extent of the rail yards and trackage, the area is poorly served by roads. Likewise, there are few visual or pedestrian amenities.

The area is expected to emerge as a new high-tech and mixed-use employment centre with a distinct character that takes its cues from its industrial past and its high-tech future. New streets, greenways and parks are planned in the False Creek Flats Structure Plan to be implemented through gradual redevelopment. The intention is to increase accessibility for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles throughout the area, linking the Flats to its surroundings and creating an urban public realm of high quality. Private developments will need to assist the transition through careful site planning, high quality architectural building expression, public and private landscaping, and appropriate pedestrian and vehicular circulation, as set out in these guidelines.

### **2.2 Street Character**

With the arrival of new uses in the False Creek Flats, a more active, interesting and attractive pedestrian-oriented street character and an enhanced public realm become priorities. To create a more urban street feeling, new buildings should locate close to the street or close to the landscape setback area, rather than back from the street behind surface parking. Windows at grade are essential to enhance the pedestrian experience and to provide transparency for casual surveillance. On large development sites, small public open spaces linking to area greenways and bikeways should be created at strategic points to allow meeting and resting places for employees and pedestrians. Street trees should be planted extensively throughout the area to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment, but also to introduce a unifying theme through co-ordination of species and placement. Terminal Avenue will be the focus of changes that will see the street better serve as a gateway into the Downtown.

- (a) Streets should be designed and built in accordance with Engineering Services standards and requirements.
- (b) Continuous sidewalks should be provided along all abutting street frontages.
- (c) Streets should be designed to create distinct pedestrian-oriented precincts and to integrate with surrounding streetscapes.
- (d) Street furniture should be durable, vandal resistant, and easily maintained.
- (e) The style of street furniture, including benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and bollards, should be consistent throughout the public realm.

**2.3 Orientation**

Buildings should be sited to define streets and to form a vertical and horizontal built edge. Buildings should front the primary streets.

**2.5 Topography: Adjustments to Grade**

Any significant alterations of existing grade should support convenient pedestrian access to property, reflect the natural slope of the land, and help visually integrate building massing into the landscape.

**2.11 Access and Circulation**

- (a) Traffic and parking analysis will be required for major developments to forecast traffic impacts. The City may require safety improvements for vehicular traffic as well as enhanced vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- (b) Vehicular circulation should occur on dedicated public streets and lanes as planned in the False Creek Flats Structure Plan, minimizing the use of internalized private roads. (See Figure 3.)

**4 Guidelines Pertaining to The Regulations of The Zoning And Development By-law (And Parking By-law)**

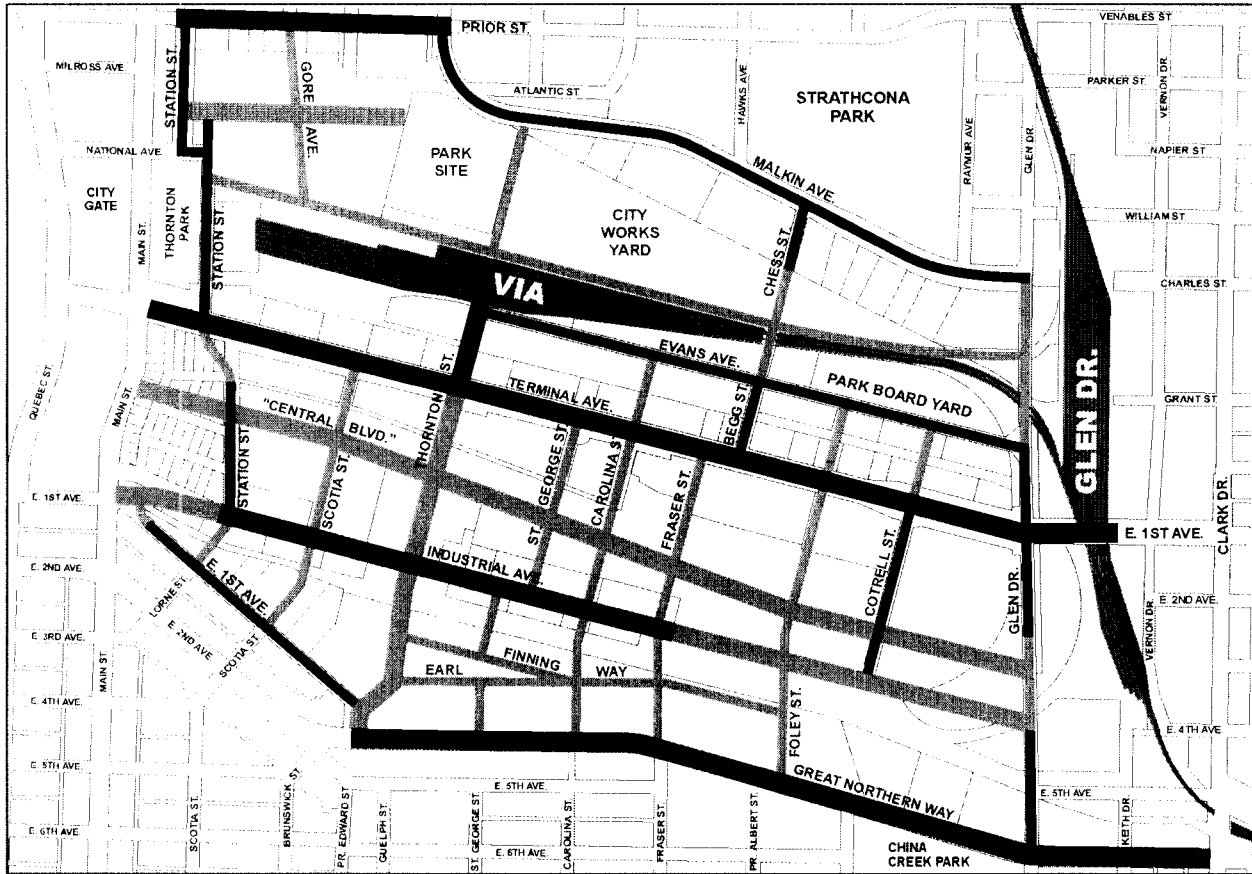
**4.3 Height and Length**





- (a) The I-3 District Schedule permits an outright building height of up to 18.3 m (60 ft.). The Director of Planning may consider heights up to 30.5 m (100 ft.) after first considering the intent of the I-3A zoning and applicable policies and guidelines, public submissions, and the effect of building height and bulk on daylight access and nearby residential districts (see I-3 Schedule).
- (b) Higher building massing should respond to the scale of adjacent buildings, public and private views, and shadowing.

**4.4 Front Yards (and Setbacks)**

- (a) Buildings should be set back a minimum of 3.0 m from the front property line so that a double row of trees may be planted along the site's full frontage (see Figure 2).
- (b) Below-grade encroachments into the yard area may be considered, provided that adequate soil depth is provided for the plant material.

Figure 2 – False Creek Flats: Primary and Secondary Streets



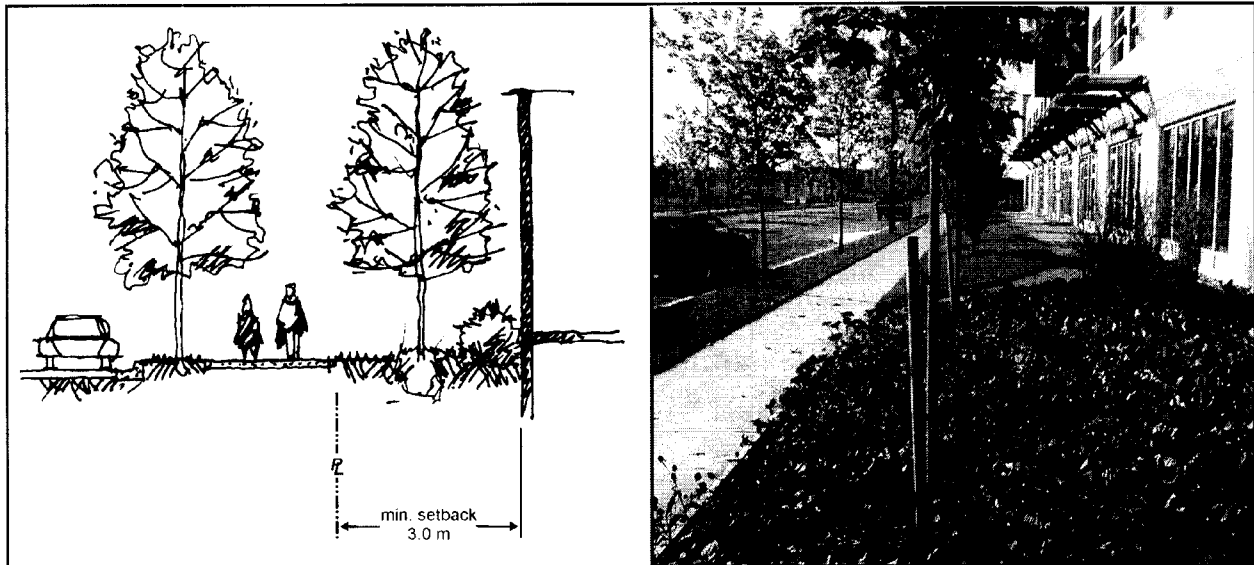
-  EXISTING PRIMARY STREET (may require widening of ROW)
-  PROPOSED PRIMARY STREET (from 2001 Structure Plan)
-  EXISTING SECONDARY STREET
-  PROPOSED SECONDARY STREET (from 2001 Structure Plan)

NOTE: Final alignment and width of streets are subject to the subdivision and development approval processes.

#### 4.5 Side Yards (and Setbacks)

- (a) Generally side yards are not required, except that when a site borders a city street, buildings should be set back a minimum of 3.0 m from the side property line so that a double row of trees may be planted (see Figure 2).
- (b) Below-grade encroachments into the yard area may be considered, provided that adequate soil depth is provided for the plant material.

Figure 3 – Cross-section and photo illustrating possible design treatments for setback area



#### 4.9 Off-street Parking and Loading

- (a) All off-street parking should be located in below- or above-grade structures or hidden in behind street-fronting buildings, however interim surface parking will be considered on sites of future phases of development, subject to front- and side-yard setbacks, and acceptable access points as determined by the Director of Planning in consultation with the City Engineer.
- (b) Raised buildings with parking occupying the entire grade level are not acceptable, although the rear section of the floor may be considered for parking provided it is suitably hidden from the street.
- (c) No parking or manoeuvring should be permitted in required yards, except in below-grade structures.
- (d) Personal safety and security should be integral to the design of parking facilities.
- (e) Parking and loading should be accessed from secondary streets and lanes, not primary streets.
- (f) Curb cuts should be minimized by combining parking and loading access and by creating shared access to neighbouring buildings.
- (g) Loading and outdoor storage areas should not be visible from primary streets. They should be located to the rear of buildings or within internalized service courts, or suitably screened from view.
- (h) Loading and outdoor storage areas should also be screened from views from adjacent residential areas, and from the Central Valley Greenway and SkyTrain alignments.

**4.16 Building Depth (and Width)**

- (a) Individual building depths or widths that exceed 30.5 m (100 ft.) should be physically separated into a series of buildings, or be designed to appear as so. The aim is to create identity, rhythm and variety.
- (b) Additional width or depth may be considered where the proposal demonstrates visual interest.
- (c) Where the need for longer, wider buildings can be demonstrated, consideration should be given to elements which break up the scale of building form. Examples include: functional elements (such as stairwells, elevator and mechanical cores); entrances; facade articulation; glazing; canopy and shading systems; and upper floor connections (transparent bridges and walkways).
- (d) Where possible, views should be provided into interior courtyards to assist in breaking up the mass of a large building.
- (e) Massing should be articulated to minimize shade and shadow of interior courtyards and of the public realm.
- (f) On sites over 61 m (200 ft.) in width, public pedestrian linkages through the site should be considered.



## **5 Architectural Components**

### **5.1 Roofs and Chimneys**

- (a) Rooftop mechanical systems, elevator penthouses, vents and other appurtenances should be minimized, clustered and integrated with the architectural treatment of the roofs and screened with materials compatible with the building and precinct character. .
- (b) Roofs should be designed and/or landscaped to be attractive as seen from above as well as from ground level. Due consideration should be given, in the design of significant landscaped roof areas, to maintenance and irrigation needs.
- (c) The use of roofs for roof gardens and roof decks to increase the usability of roofs is encouraged, particularly where buildings are stepped and roofs are accessible to adjacent interior space.

### **5.3 Entrances, Stairs and Porches**

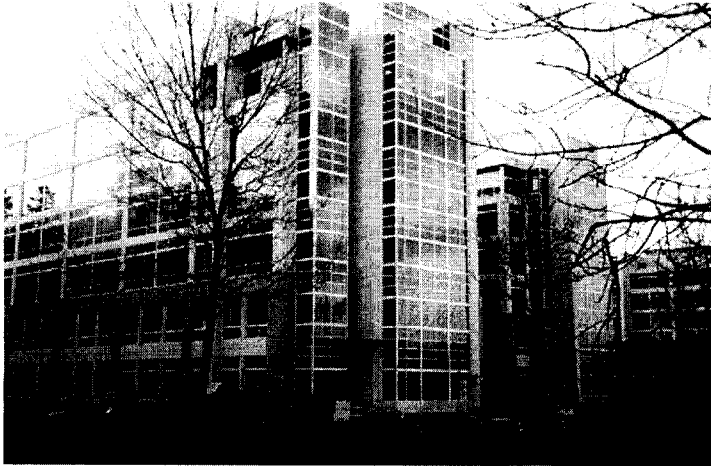
- (a) Main building entries should be clearly identifiable and accessible from the street, and should provide generous weather protection.
- (b) Atria and open or glazed staircases of generous width are encouraged to facilitate pedestrian movement and interaction between levels, including parking levels.

### **5.5 Exterior Walls and Finishing**

- (a) The use of mirrored or highly reflective glass is discouraged to allow views into building activities, especially at grade level.
- (b) Exterior building design should reflect the industrial character of the precinct by utilizing high-quality, durable materials.
- (c) Exterior materials that are encouraged (but are not limited to) include:
  - (i) contemporary metal cladding systems and painted corrugated metal cladding;
  - (ii) heavy timber structural elements;
  - (iii) glass and steel;
  - (iv) architectural concrete, especially high volume fly-ash mixes.
- (d) Stucco and vinyl are discouraged as primary exterior materials.

**Appendix B**  
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*Photos of Architectural Characteristics*



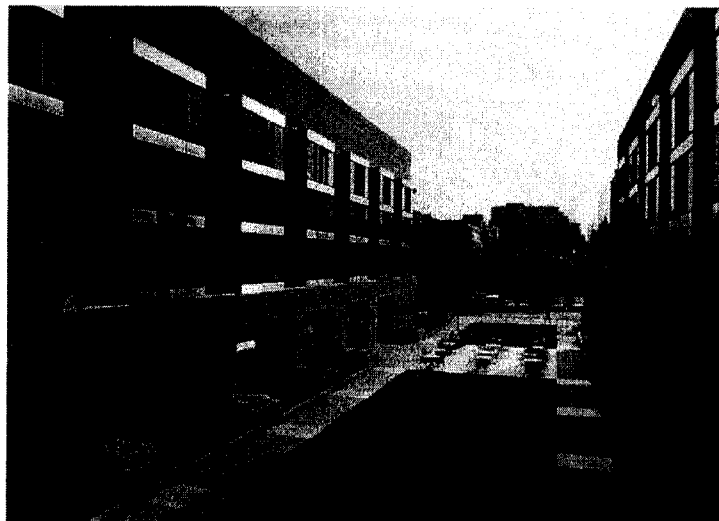
*Break up large buildings into a series of buildings*



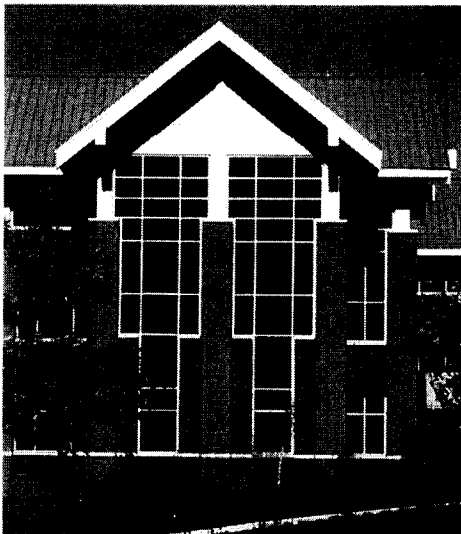
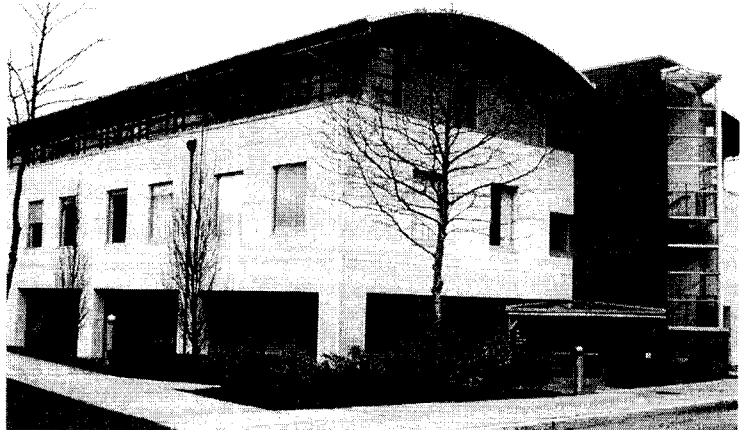
*Use atria to interconnect floors*



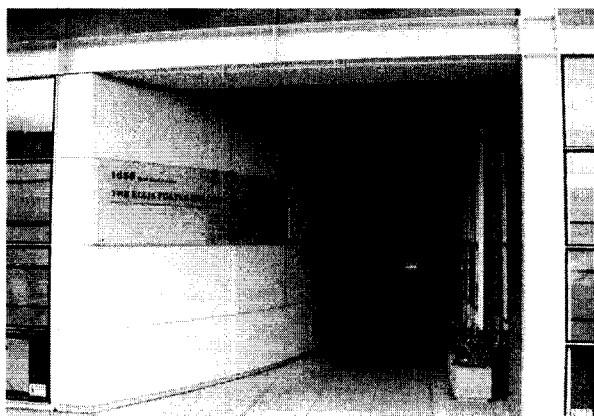
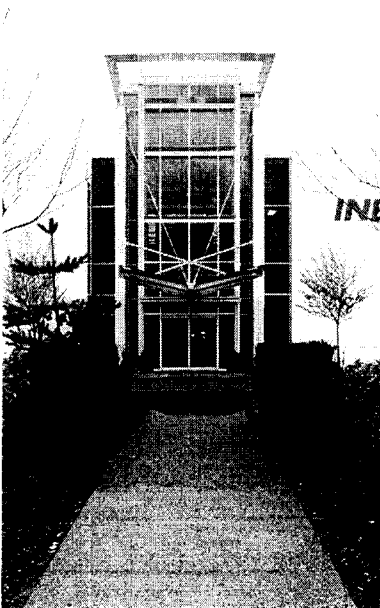
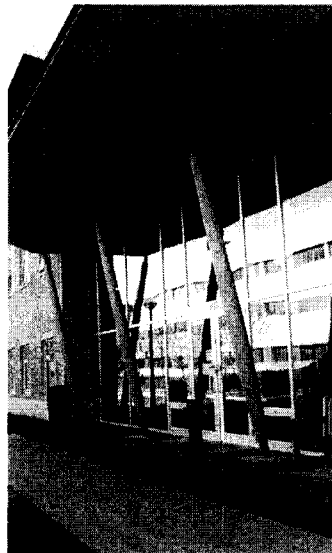
*Active street edge with weather protection*



*Landscaped courtyards between building elements*



*Building entrance treatments*



**5.7 Lights**

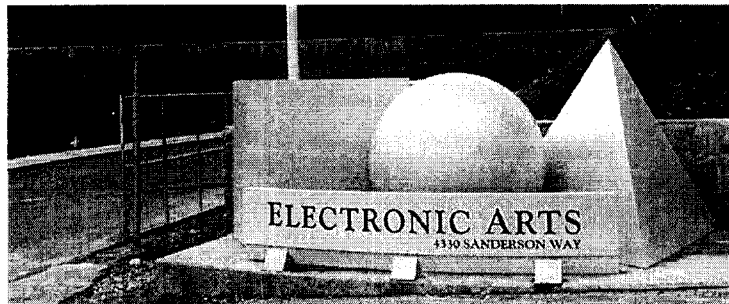
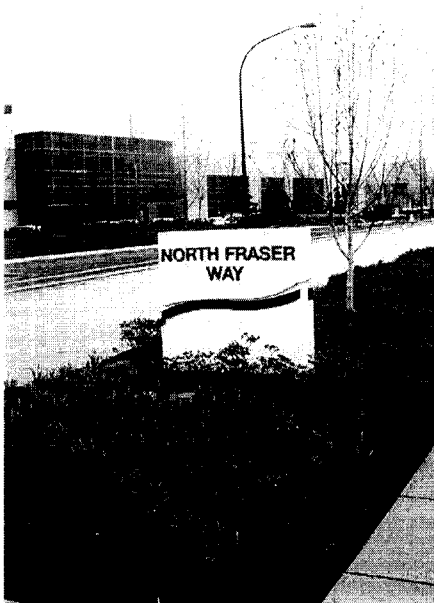
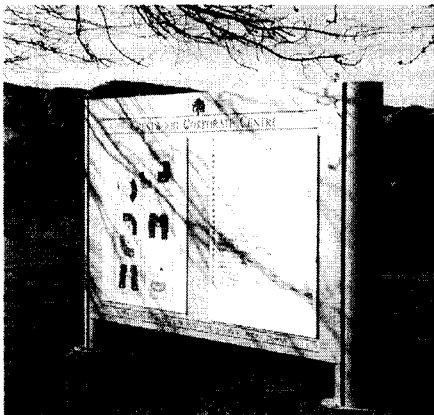
Exterior lighting should be used to ensure safety and security, and to focus attention toward site and architectural features.

- (a) Street lighting should be in accordance with Engineering Services standards and requirements, with a consistent and integrated system used throughout the high-tech precinct.
- (b) Site lighting should confine the spread of light to within a development's property boundaries. Fixtures should be oriented away from public view. Lighting should be sited and specified so as to minimize direct glare impact on adjacent properties, surrounding streets and nearby residential developments. The use of concealed sources is encouraged.
- (c) Short-masted and local area lighting is preferred over high-mounted, general site lighting.
- (d) Pedestrian pathway lighting should be configured to primarily illuminate walking surfaces.
- (e) Landscape lighting is encouraged to enhance the landscape design. The uplighting of trees, the backlighting of walls to silhouette trees, and the underbrush lighting of groundcovers are all exemplary treatments.
- (f) Accent lighting of prominent site features, such as ponds, fountains and works of arts, is also encouraged
- (g) Entrances to buildings and dramatic multi-storey interior spaces should be illuminated to enhance their visibility and significance after dark.
- (h) Building and landscape lighting should be provided to augment street lighting and to illuminate off-street public areas such as entry plazas.

**5.8 Signs**

- (a) Signage should be consistent and integrated throughout multi-building, campus-like developments to signify entrances and facilitate wayfinding.
- (b) A building's signage should be incorporated into its architectural design.
- (c) Retail signage should be incorporated in or near the canopy, visible from the sidewalk and street, and of high quality materials.

*Signage possibilities*



## **7 Open Space**

### **7.1 Public Open Space**

- (a) Open space intended for public use should be clearly identified and designed as such.
- (b) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be incorporated.
- (c) Security fences should be: designed to improve the visual landscape of the street, consistent with the design and high-quality materials of the building, and complementary to the landscaping. Chain link fencing, particularly along street-facing edges, should not be permitted.

### **7.1 Semi-Public Open Space**

A unified system of paving, furniture, signage, lighting, and plant material should be used throughout each development.

- (a) The use of public art and historical references is encouraged.
- (b) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles should be incorporated.

### **7.4 Greenways and Bikeways**

Direct public connections through sites should be provided where appropriate to facilitate access to the city's greenway and bikeways routes.

- (a) Sites adjacent to greenways should seek to enhance the public's enjoyment of the greenway by providing adjacent landscaping and by screening out service, parking and storage activities.
- (b) To ensure the safe movement of pedestrians and bicycles, clear sight lines along greenway routes should be preserved, particularly at intersections and vehicular entrances.

## **8 Landscaping**

- (a) Landscape treatment of the street edge should include double rows of street trees along both primary and secondary streets, one row in the boulevard area and a second inside the property line in the yard setback area. The setback area should be further planted with understorey shrubs or groundcovers.
- (b) Existing trees of quality should be retained where possible.
- (c) Use trees of sufficient caliper (minimum 75 mm) and height to create a reasonable impact when planted.
- (d) Co-ordinate species and spacing of street trees to provide a unified treatment.
- (e) In paved areas, the street trees should be planted in structural soil at a minimum depth of 1.0 m.
- (f) Concrete tree grates should be utilized as per the City standard.
- (g) All street tree plantings should be to Park Board and Engineering Services standards.
- (h) A layered landscape treatment (using elements such as fencing, trellises, and plantings) should be provided to screen loading areas and any permitted surface parking lots, while still providing strategic visual access to signs, entries and access areas.

*Public Realm and Streetscape Images*

