ANIMATING UNDERUTILIZED PUBLIC SPACE

A strategic design plan for the Westsong Walkway in Victoria, British Columbia

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ABSTRACT

Public open spaces in the urban environment have a myriad of benefits, including increased property values, decreased stress levels in residents, and environmental sanctuaries for wildlife. Greenways and linear parks in particular provide the added benefits of acting as recreational corridors and exploiting a succession of views. This strategic design plan focuses on the Westsong Walkway, a linear waterfront park located in Greater Victoria, British Columbia. It is currently a 'sleepy' walkway that suffers from a lack of polarity and vibrancy, but has great potential to be a successful waterfront park and regional destination. This study utilizes site observations, a scan of the literature, and current policies and best practices to provide strategic design recommendations that can guide interventions to transform the Westsong Walkway into a vibrant linear park. The three major recommendations for improving the walkway and adjacent neighbourhoods relate to zoning changes, programming, and physical design. As this plan was only able to systematically study usage of the walkway over a short period of time, it further recommends a number of future studies that should be undertaken to ensure the success of the Westsong Walkway. The implementation of this strategic design plan will have positive social and economic effects for the Westsong Walkway and surrounding areas. The relatively minimal costs and short time period of implementation will display immediate benefits for both Victoria and Esquimalt. It is the hope that this strategic design plan will transform the Westsong Walkway as well as the adjacent neighbourhoods into vibrant and vital spaces. Other urban planners looking to improve the overall quality of the built environment through public space revitalization should also use the concepts found in this plan.

Les espaces publics en milieu urbain profitent à la ville en plusieurs façons, notamment en accroissant la valeur des propriétés, en réduisant le niveau de stress chez les résidents, et en offrant à la faune des sanctuaires écologiques. Plus particulièrement, les voies vertes et les parcs linéaires fournissent des avantages supplémentaires. Ils agissent en tant que corridors récréatifs et font ressortir une succession de points de vue. Ce plan de conception stratégique est axé sur la Promenade Westsong, un parc riverain linéaire situé dans la région de Victoria, en Colombie-Britannique. Cette Promenade se trouve actuellement à être sous-utilisée en raison d'un manque de polarité et de dynamisme. Toutefois, elle a un grand potentiel pour devenir un parc riverain recherché, voire même une destination régionale. Ce projet se repose donc sur des observations sur le terrain, une analyse de la littérature, ainsi que les politiques actuelles et les meilleures pratiques pour fournir des recommandations sur la conception stratégique qui pourraient orienter les interventions nécessaires pour transformer la Promenade Westsong en parc linéaire dynamique. Les trois principales recommandations pour l'amélioration de la Promenade et ses quartiers adjacents sont liées aux changements de zonage, la programmation et la conception physique. Dans le cadre de ce plan, on n'a pu étudier systématiquement l'utilisation de la passerelle que sur une courte période de temps. Il est donc recommandé que d'autres études soient entreprises afin d'assurer la réussite de la Promenade Westsong. La mise en œuvre de ce plan de conception stratégique aura des effets positifs tant à l'échelle économique que sociale pour la Promenade Westsong ainsi que les régions avoisinantes. Les coûts seraient relativement minimes et le calendrier pour sa mise en œuvre serait bref, ce qui aurait pour effet de faire réaliser des bénéfices immédiats au sein de Victoria et d'Esquimalt. Ce plan de conception stratégique a le potentiel de transformer la Promenade Westsong, ainsi que les quartiers adjacents, en espaces dynamiques et vitales. Les concepts qui y sont proposés pourraient également être pertinents pour d'autres urbanistes qui cherchent à améliorer la qualité globale de l'environnement bâti grâce à la revitalisation des espaces publics.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Canada is a country with abundant waterfront spaces. With three oceans, countless lakes, and great rivers, many Canadian cities have exciting opportunities to take advantage of waterfronts. When made public, these spaces can positively affect the economy (e.g. commerce and tourism) and society (e.g. improved public realm, civic pride, identity, and health). However, the privatization of waterfronts has been an issue: historically, they were often privatized in cities by industry for ease of transportation, while more recently have tended to be privatized for residences that exploit the magnificent views. It has therefore become more important than ever to not only maintain public waterfronts, but also expand upon existing waterfronts. Several Canadian cities have realized or are realizing the vast potential of urban waterfronts: Montreal has successfully maintained its Old Port for public life, Toronto has implemented various waterfront strategies, including an ambitious new comprehensive plan, and Vancouver now has one of the largest public waterfronts in North America. Victoria, British Columbia is also realizing its potential through waterfront linear parks.

Waterfront public spaces are one example of linear parks, which Kevin Lynch (1981) defined as "open spaces…designed primarily for movement…[that] lead from one destination to the next" (Lynch, 1981, p. 443). These parks tend to be located along prominent landscape features, such as rivers, canals, or oceans. However, shortcomings often plague linear parks in the very basic sense of linking various attractions or nodes (i.e., the lack of destinations and polarity), and in terms of exploiting the variety of views available throughout the park. The Westsong Walkway in Victoria is a prime example of a linear park that fails to exploit the ocean and harbour as "an unfolding succession of views" (Lynch, 1981, p. 444) and suffers from a lack of polarity. In this sense, the Westsong Walkway and many linear parks suffer from a lack of programming that increases usage and polarity that attracts users from one end to the other. Unleashing the potential activities and view corridors of the Westsong Walkway would do much to turn it from a sleepy linear park into a vibrant public promenade.

The Westsong Walkway forms a 2.7km (1.7 mile) linear waterfront park located in Greater Victoria, British Columbia (Figure 1). The majority of the walkway (2.2km) is located in the municipality of Victoria, where it is called the Westsong Walkway. In contrast, the remaining 500m-stretch is located in the municipality of Esquimalt and is called the West Bay Walkway.

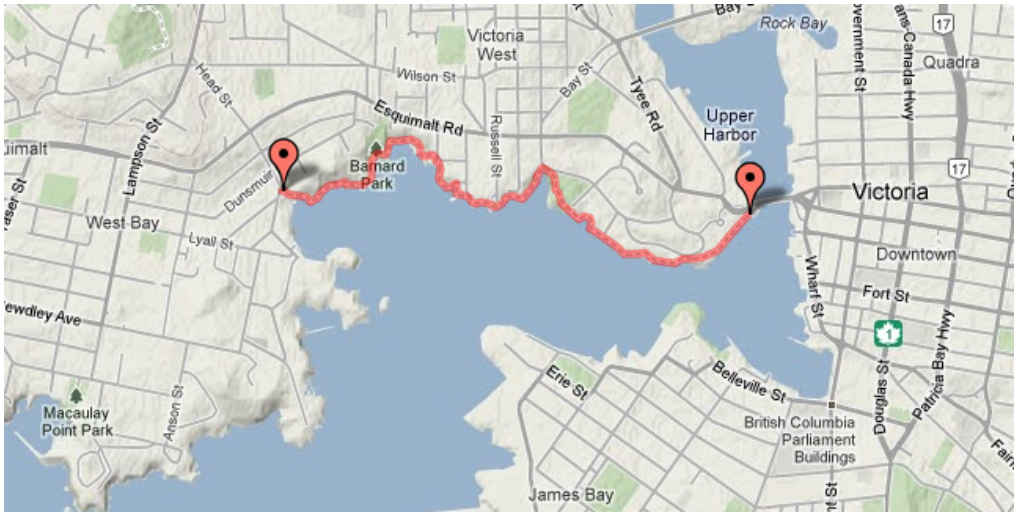

Figure 1: The Westsong Walkway in Greater Victoria.

The construction of the Westsong Walkway was a collaborative effort between the Provincial Capital Commission, the City of Victoria, and the Township of Esquimalt. The project was completed over a number of phases from 1975 to 1990. From 1990 to the present, the walkway has remained relatively sterile, in the sense that it acts as a sleepy pathway simply used for wandering from one end to the other. If both Esquimalt and Victoria want it to remain a sleepy pathway, then they should continue on the current trend of simply maintaining the walkway. In an Order in Council request for funding an addition to the walkway in 1988, it was stated that the walkway was "an amenity of regional significance has been created" (untitled document obtained from Susan McLean, Provincial Capital Commission, personal communication, March 7, 2013). It is time to make the Westsong Walkway a regionally significant linear park. This report presents a strategic design plan intended to guide planners, elected officials, and policy-makers to help ensure the building of a vibrant and vital public walkway.

RATIONALE

The Westsong Walkway is a well used by walkers, joggers, and runners. However, cyclists, skateboarders, and rollerbladers are currently not allowed on the walkway due to the narrow and winding path. The walkway is located at the entrance to a magnificent working harbour in downtown Victoria that has a variety of uses including transportation (float planes, helicopters, and ferries), industry (gravel, ship repair), and tourism (sightseeing, whale-watching, sailing). Use of the walkway is limited: it is used neither for a destination nor a gateway. From initial observations and casual conversations, the trend is that people who know of the walkway utilize it primarily for exercise and its views. In effect, the Westsong Walkway is currently a path only for those who know of it, but it has the potential to be a great destination and public resource in Greater Victoria, and a gateway between the municipalities of Esquimalt and Victoria.

The neighbourhoods adjacent to the walkway are primarily residential in use and character. The eastern section contains new upscale apartments and townhouses with the primary mode of tenure being condominiums; the centre provides older apartments, tenured both by condominiums and rentals; and the western section provides single detached houses. In addition, there is a small hub of light industry located around the central part of the walkway. Other than a local pub and the West Bay Marina (which includes private and public moorage, a private floathome village, a private RV park, and a public restaurant), there are few commercial activities along the Westsong Walkway, which makes this a prime area for a urban village concept, as recommended by Victoria's Official Community Plan.

Several important projects and probable future circumstances make this proposal very relevant at this point in time. The project that will have the biggest impact is the replacement of the Johnson Street Bridge that will be constructed by 2016. Included in the bridge replacement is a connection to the future David Foster Way (a harbour walkway on the downtown Victoria side of the Inner Harbour), the enhancement of green space at the eastern terminus of the Westsong Walkway and western side of the Johnson Street Bridge, and finally the future terminus of the island commuter train, the E&N Rail. A new development by Reliance Properties on the downtown side of the Johnson Street Bridge will connect the future David Foster Way and the existing Inner Harbour walkway through a publicly accessible harbour walk. In addition, the Westsong Walkway will be able to connect to the existing, and very popular, Galloping Goose Regional Trail. The bridge replacement project is expected to create a well-used area and a gateway to and from the Westsong Walkway on the Victoria terminus. However, the Esquimalt terminus lacks polarity. Currently, this terminus of the walkway has an attractive marina, but then exits into a residential neighbourhood with no connections to the main street (300m away) or to the nearby town center (1km away). This creates a barrier of sorts, in which people turn around as soon as they come to the end of the walkway in Esquimalt. Improved polarity can increase interest and foot traffic in Esquimalt as a whole.

Other projects that will have impacts on the walkway are the development of an international marina, the construction of the E&N Trail (a Rail-with-Trail linear park), Victoria's sewage treatment, and the revitalization of the historic Roundhouse (a cluster of abandoned rail buildings that are included in a new development).

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

This project explores strategic practices in urban design and urban planning with specific reference to urban public space. Focusing on the Westsong Walkway, it suggests a strategy for improving this excellent public resource, considering the ways in which park space contributes to property values and neighbourhood revitalization. The application of this research into a strategic design plan provides a case study with respect to park planning, destination planning, urban design, inter-jurisdictional considerations, and planning politics. The ultimate goal is to inform the development of a comprehensive network of vibrant linear parkways spanning the Greater Victoria waterfront.

This project is presented in the form of a strategic design plan. Drawing on precedents from successful North American linear parks, urban waterfronts, and waterfront parks, a strategy for improving the Westsong Walkway has been developed with recommendations for physical design improvements, regulatory changes (such as zoning), and improvements to programming, such as the creation of events to attract more users to the area and improve the vitality and vibrancy of the adjacent neighbourhoods.

The broad preoccupations of this strategic design plan revolve around revitalizing public space and how strategic infrastructure improvements can contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of an entire neighbourhood. The specific research question is: What can be done with the existing Westsong Walkway to strengthen its role in the landscape of Greater Victoria and to enhance its vitality and vibrancy as a significant public space?

The objectives are as follows:

- To propose a strategy for animating the existing Westsong Walkway into a destination in Greater Victoria
- To explore ways to improve the polarity between Victoria and Esquimalt
- To develop strategies that will move the adjacent neighbourhood towards an urban village concept, as expressed by Victoria's Official Community Plan

METHODOLOGY

To fully understand the landscape that is the Westsong Walkway, a scan of the literature has covered a variety of topics. The first is a general overview of public space and the public realm, which included general design strategies to create a landscape that is associated with a positive sense of place. The second topic is urban waterfronts, with a specific focus on waterfront public space and private development. David Gordon has written extensively on waterfront revitalization, and was extensively utilized in this review. The final topic is that of destination planning, which included tourism and event planning. This involved researching how to get people to utilize space, which can be done through various methods: festivals, markets, programming, and marketing.

The second phase of this project involved studying the regulatory and political context in which the Westsong Walkway is found. This included researching the existing plans from Victoria, Esquimalt and the Capital Regional District. Examples include Official Community Plans, neighbourhood plans, design guidelines, and parks and greenway plans. Specific attention was given to the current mandates and needs in the area. In addition, I utilized archival material such as newspaper articles to gain a broad understanding of the context in which the walkway was built and continues to exist.

The third phase of this study required reviewing relevant precedents, specifically with regards to linear parks, waterfront parks, and destination planning. These precedents were chosen from their successes and failures in displaying a systematic reinvention and reclamation of public space in an underutilized area. An empirically relevant precedent is Battery Park City in New York, which utilized its waterfront redevelopment to revitalize an entire neighbourhood. Similar precedents include the Vancouver seawall, Raleigh's pop-up urbanism, and Canadian waterfronts such as Halifax, as well as Victoria's other harbour areas.

The final phase involved the creation of a strategic design plan for the Westsong Walkway, which included an analysis and diagnostic leading to urban design strategies and planning recommendations. In December 2012 and January 2013, I visited the Westsong Walkway and observed various patterns of use that included types of users, high-traffic times, points of interest and success, and areas that have opportunities for improvement. I then synthesized the information and created a strategic plan that drew upon appropriate precedents.

SITE CONTEXT

The Westsong Walkway, linear waterfront park located in Greater Victoria, British Columbia, traverses through two official neighbourhoods, Songhees and West Bay, but there is no official neighbourhood in-between the two (Figure 2). The construction of the Westsong Walkway was a collaborative effort between the Provincial Capital Commission, the City of Victoria, and the Township of Esquimalt. The project was completed over a number of phases that began in 1975 and lasted until its official opening in 1990, and is "the only uninterrupted level route connecting the waterfronts of Esquimalt and Victoria Harbour" (Esquimalt News, September 1995).

The name of the walkway is not consistent. In Victoria it is named the Westsong Walkway. In Esquimalt it is named the West Bay Walkway, though on Esquimalt's tourist site, My Esquimalt, it is called the West Song Walkway (Township of Esquimalt, 2012). On Google Maps it is called the Songhees Walkway. To some residents it is just called "that walkway that goes from the Johnson Street Bridge to Esquimalt". In 1990, the Provincial Capital Commission announced that the walkway would officially be called the "Westsong Way" (Esquimalt News, October 1990). For the purposes of this proposal, I will use the name Westsong Walkway, not only because this is the most common name used for the majority of the walkway, but also because the name derives from the Songhees Nation, the aboriginals who first lived on this land.

Access to the walkway is mainly by foot or vehicle. Parking can be found at the Esquimalt terminus and on the various side streets located along the walkway. Cyclists, skateboarders, and rollerbladers are currently banned from on the walkway due to the narrow and winding path. In fact, from Esquimalt to Lime Bay Park, the walkway is so thin that only two people can walk abreast, and any passing would require both directions to fall into single file. Portions of the walkway from Lime Bay Park to the Victoria terminus are wider, but the walkway is still no wider than an average city sidewalk. Subsequently, there are very few bicycle locks located on or near the walkway, which discourages cyclists from coming to the walkway, locking their bike, and continuing on for a walk. Amusingly, dogs were originally not allowed on the Esquimalt section of the walkway until 1988 when Esquimalt council voted to permit dogs (Esquimalt Star, December 1988). The other major access to the walkway is by harbour ferry. These small ferries transport people throughout Victoria's harbour, and three stops are located on the walkway: Delta Ocean Point, Songhees, and Westbay Marina (Figure 3). The average person can walk the Westsong Walkway in just over 30 minutes (Bohannon, 1997), but this does not include stopping and enjoying the sights.

Due to the various phases and long time period in which the walkway was constructed, the physical design is not consistent along the length of the walkway. For the purposes of this report, the walkway and the adjacent neighbourhoods have been split into three major areas that correspond to their Census Dissemination Areas: West Bay, Vic West (both Vic West W and Vic West E), and Songhees (Figure 4). These areas are distinct both in physical design and in population. I will begin by detailing the physical design with special attention to various points of interest of each of the three areas (Figure 5).

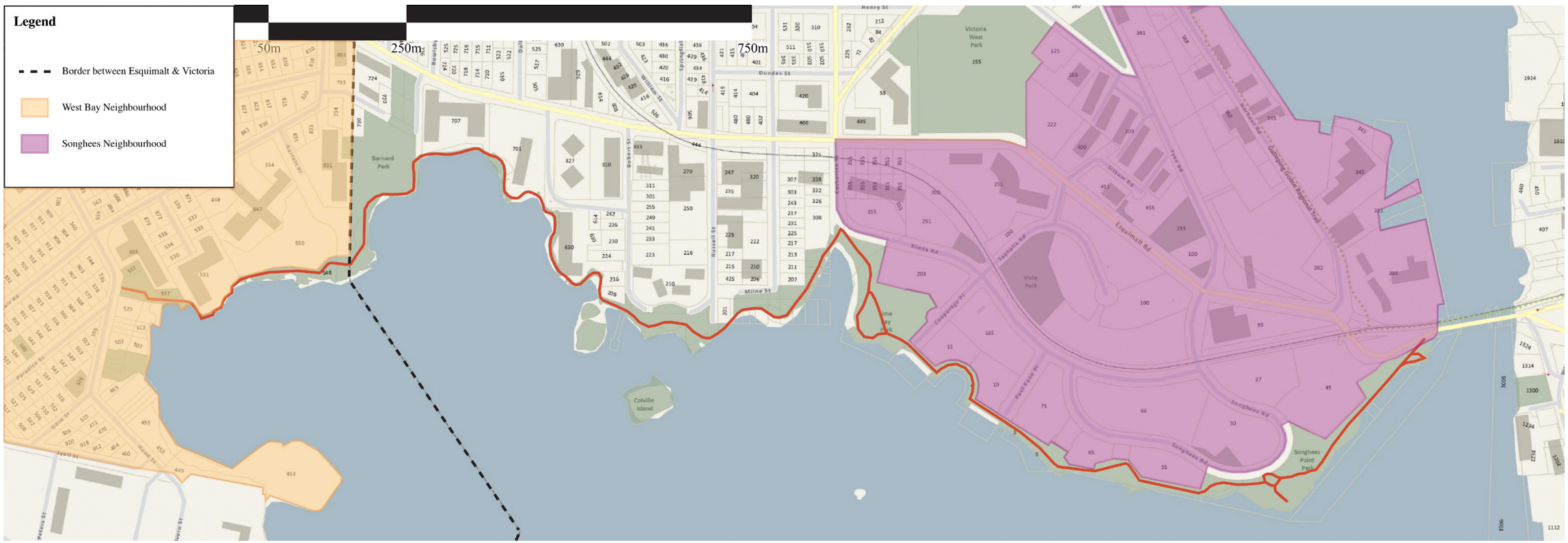

Figure 2: The Westsong Walkway's adjacent municipalities and neighbourhoods.

Figure 3: Official stops of the Victoria Harbour Ferry.

The western terminus of the Westsong Walkway is where the walkway begins and ends in the West Bay neighbourhood in Esquimalt. Here one can find a six-meter wide wooden viewpoint that looks over the Westbay Marine Village, Sailor's Cove Marina, and Hidden Harbour Marine Centre. The Westbay Marine Village features concrete docks for both live-aboard and recreational boaters. In addition, there is also a Marine Home Village, which provides space for 36 floating dwellings (similar to the extremely popular tourist destination in Victoria, Fisherman's Wharf). A restaurant and RV park further south complete the Marine Village. The Hidden Harbour Marine Centre is made up of four docks, and two residential properties that are used for office and commercial uses.

At the terminus of the walkway, a community board displays a simple map of Esquimalt, a map of the walkway (to be discussed later), and posters of events that have long since passed. Moving along the walkway, the majority of the Esquimalt section is wood construction with wooden rails – designed to resemble a boardwalk. Halfway into the Esquimalt section are steep access stairs from the Swallows Landing development. These stairs were designed to provide access to the walkway from Swallow's Landing, while having the minimal affect on the protected Garry Oak Meadow they traverse through, which is also the location of the historically and economically significant Matson Lands. Two educational boards can be found in this area relating to the Matson Lands. Additionally, an official break in the walkway railing allows for access to the intertidal zone. This section is one of the thinnest in width – approximately one-meter in width. Throughout this section, the main views are of the marina, the Olympic Mountains, and Fisherman's Wharf. A variety of animals can be seen here, including herons, otters, seals, and in rare cases, pelicans.

The Vic West portion begins in the west in Barnard Park, "In a

secluded corner of the City of Victoria" (Descoteau, May 2005). Here the walkway splits into two paths. The western path diverges away from the water and up into the main section of Barnard Park, where two tennis courts and a playground are located. The eastern path briefly passes through a rocky outcrop and turns into a bridge over another intertidal zone. On this bridge is an educational board related to the intertidal zone, as well as official stairs built to access the zone. At high tide, the stairs lead directly into the ocean. The Vic West area of the walkway is, for the majority, constructed of concrete, with new metal railings. Two wooden bridges warn users of potential falls with "Slippery when wet" signs. Located on the walkway in front of the Princess Patricia Apartments is a wooden gazebo, where users can sit sheltered and enjoy the view of the harbour opening onto the ocean. Near the middle of this section is another access point where users can get to the intertidal zone during low tide via a staircase.

There is an outcrop of rocks that can be explored during low tide, but access to these rocks is non-existent during high tide. Rainbow Park makes up the centre of this area, which is less a park and more so a viewpoint. People on the walkway have a number of benches to choose from, and vehicles can drive right up to the edge of the park to utilize the viewpoint without ever leaving their vehicles. A thin peninsula extends out into the ocean – at the end is a picnic table for summer lunches. The views feature the Olympic Mountains, Victoria's breakwater known as Ogden Point, and Fisherman's Wharf. Kayaks, sailboats, and whale watching boats can all be seen passing by. Rainbow Park is also the ideal spot to watch floatplanes taking off and landing, and in the distance one can view helicopters traveling from Victoria to Vancouver. As the path curves east from Rainbow Park, there is a mural of a dragon along the wall. Just up from this mural is another access point to the beach. At this access point is Fan-Ta-Sea Isle, an unsanctioned structure constructed from driftwood and painted in bright colours. The Vic West portion of the walkway ends at Spinnakers Brewpub. The Songhees area begins at Lime Bay Park opposite the historic Roundhouse and ends at the Johnson Street Bridge. The whole of the walkway in this section is concrete. The railings that do exist are metal, but for much of this section there are no railings. Lime Bay Park is a grass field with rock outcrops and a view loop of sorts. The walkway passes a number of dead-end streets where cars park with the ability for the drivers to stay inside while enjoying the view. The other major point of interest in the Songhees area is Songhees Point Park. To mark the significance of the first peoples who lived on this land, two totem poles were erected in the park. In addition, one of seven "Signs of Lekwungen" art installations is located in the park, constructed by First Nations artist Butch Dick. This installation is adjacent to the circular viewpoint that was constructed at the park's highest point. The walkway continues to its terminus at the Johnson Street Bridge, where another small viewpoint is located – often overrun by Canadian Geese. The prominent views in the Songhees area of the walkway are of Fisherman's Wharf, Victoria's downtown and Inner Harbour, and the Johnson Street Bridge.

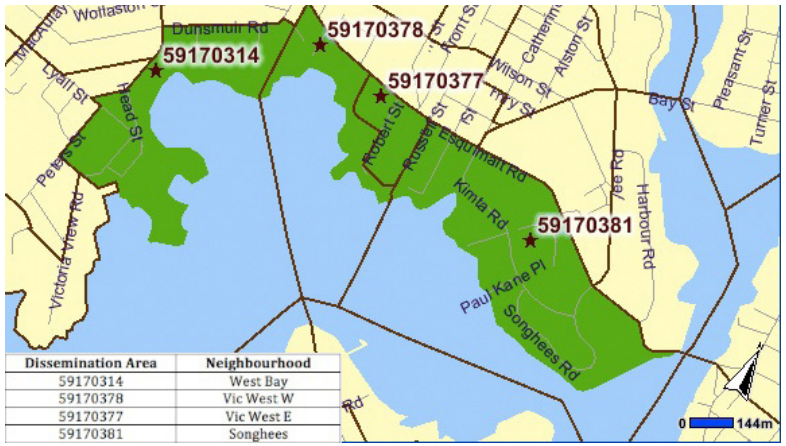

Figure 4: Dissemination areas and the corresponding neighbourhoods.

Esquimalt and Songhees

The planning of the Westsong Walkway began in the early 70s – in two different places. In 1974, Esquimalt developed a plan for the development of the shoreline, entitled West Bay Shoreline Development: A Study Prepared for the Corporation of the Township of Esquimalt, and conducted by AESL Consulting Engineers. At this time the Westbay Marina was just beginning construction. In 1975, construction of the West Bay Walkway in Esquimalt began (Table 1).

In 1972, two years before Esquimalt received its plan for the West Bay shoreline, Victoria City Council approved in principle a seafront walkway from Barnard Avenue to Maitland Street that would have cost $48,500 ("Seafront Walkway Approved", 1972). However, it appears that this development did not occur until November 1985 at a cost of $190,000 (Table 1). In the 1980s, numerous plans were created and ideas generated for the Songhees neighbourhood. One of which would have turned Songhees into a replica First Nations village for tourists (Mindelhall, 2012), while another suggested the creation of a large, fake, light-up tree, which would have been visible from across the harbour. In 1984, a plan was created for the Songhees that would guide the Songhees towards a neighbourhood with residential, commercial, open space, and light industry. Figure 6 displays what this plan looked like, and compares it to a present photo with the proposed marina.

As can be derived from Table 1, the total expenditures for the Westsong Walkway from the Provincial Capital Commission amounted to $1,02,610, although the $12,000 for the Westsong Way Study on twinning the walkway was never utilized (Susan McLean, Provincial Capital Commission, personal communication, March 7, 2013). In addition, Victoria and Esquimalt each had their own expenditures. According to The Islander (February 1985), "Total expenditures for the work in the Esquimalt section were $486,000 and $142,000 in Victoria" by February 10, 1985.

Table 1: Provincial Capital Commission phasing and funding of the Westsong Walkway

Phase	Date	Project Title	Funding
Survey	1970	Promenade-Esquimalt	$6,000
Phase 1	1975	West Bay-Esquimalt	$200,000
Phase 2	1976	West Bay Development	$98,500
Phase 3	July 1977-1978	Esquimalt-West Bay Development	$106,580
N/A	July 1977	Victoria-West Bay Seafront Walkway	$117,500
N/A	November 1978	West Bay - Victoria & Esquimalt	$25,000
Project 50	1978	West Bay Development - Esquimalt	$75,000
Phase 1	November 1985	West Bay Walkway – Barnard to Maitland	$190,000
N/A	July 1987	West Bay Walkway – Maitland to Robert	$162,030
N/A	August 1988	West Bay Walkway – Russell to Mary Street	$190,000
N/A	1990	West Bay Walkway, West End Design	$20,000
N/A	1995	Westsong Way Study	$12,000

In January 2013, I conducted systematic observations along the walkway in order to determine its current usage. The findings are summarized in Table 2 and Table 3 with the locations of each site on Figure 7. The main trafficked areas are Site A and C, or the termini of the walkway. From my unofficial observations, I found Site C to be the busiest, despite it only being the busiest on January 6th. Adults are the main users of the walkway, with seniors being the second most, and very few children use the walkway. This correlates to the demographics of the area, which will be discussed later. Most users walk the Westsong Walkway, followed by runners, and then dog walkers. The one user

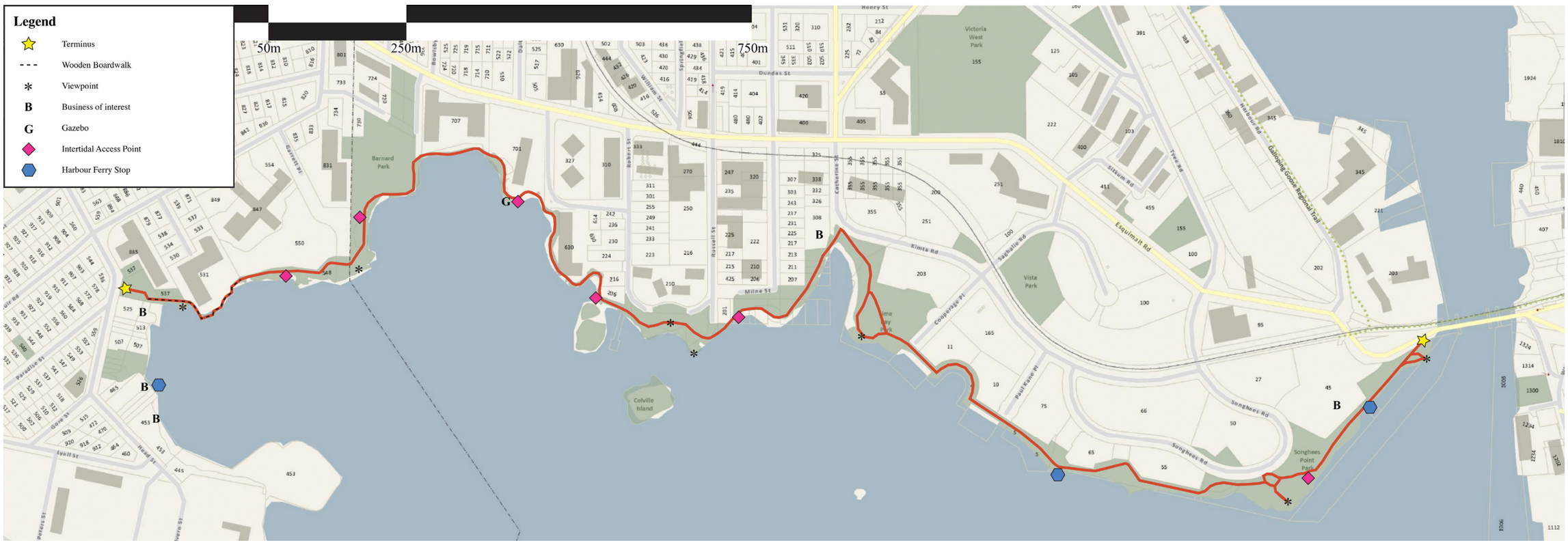

Figure 5: Various points of interest along the Westsong Walkway.

Figure 6: The 1984 plan for Songhees (top) compared to the current plan for the international marina.

categorized as "Other" was a cyclist, illegally using the walkway.

The observations of the flow of the walkway and surrounding streets, along with pedestrian gathering points, can be found on Figure 8. Pedestrian traffic is relative, so "high" simply means the busiest section of the walkway as opposed to the "high" traffic of a bustling downtown area.

Minor controversies have also occurred over the years regarding the walkway. In May 2005, it was discovered that the future of the bridge that connects the Victoria and Esquimalt portions of the walkway would be in doubt. That month, the City of Victoria closed the bridge without warning and forced users to take the alternate pathway away from the water. Users were afraid that the 80-year old bridge would be demolished completely and the alternate path would become the main path, which raised safety concerns (Faulkner, August 2005). The City had good reason to close the bridge: a routine check discovered corroded steel beams, rotting wood, and deteriorating concrete columns (Descoteau, May 2005). The possibility that the alternate route would become the main route empowered residents to take action, and a petition was created to replace the bridge that raised 1300 signatures (Descoteau, September 2005). Despite the bridge being located in Victoria, Esquimalt was urged to share the approximately $600,000 cost of the new bridge, as it directly affects the Esquimalt portion. At one point, the cost of the replacement seemed insurmountable for Victoria, and at the time Esquimalt Mayor Darwin Robinson suggested handing over control of the walkway to the Capital Regional District (CRD). The walkway would have fit under the CRD's definition of a linear park, and therefore Mayor Robinson argued the CRD should "fund it, and take care of it" (Faulkner, October 2005). Councilors from Victoria agreed that the CRD should be funding urban greenways.

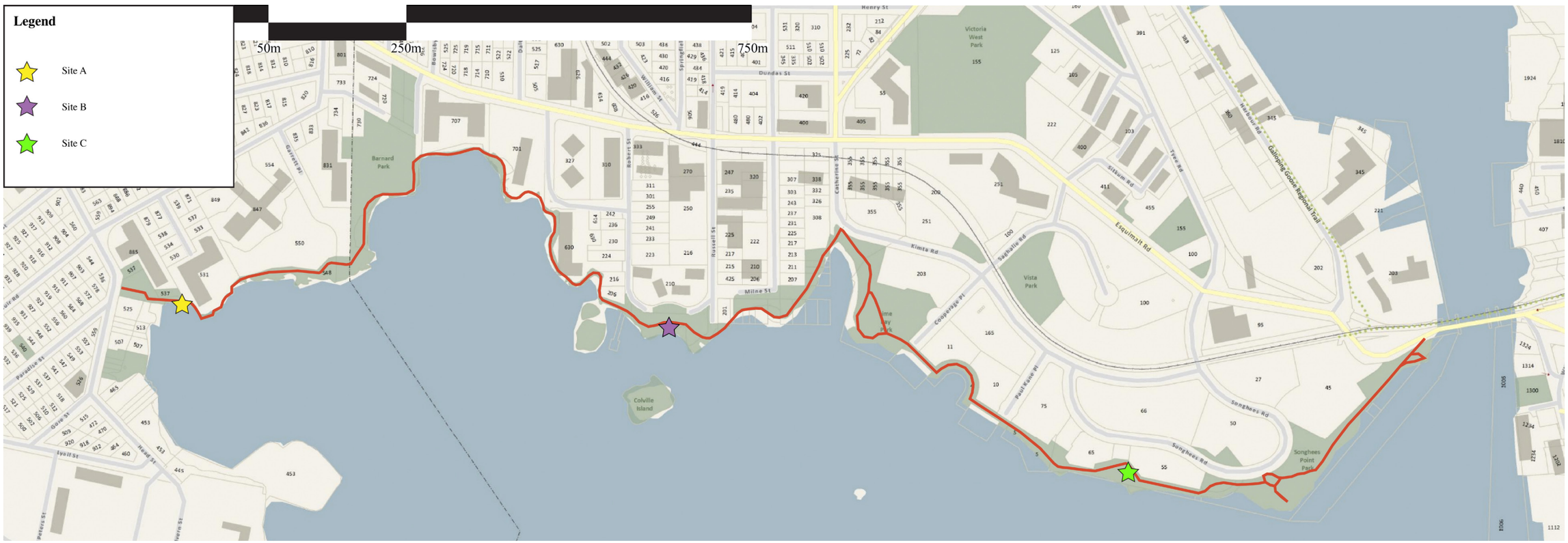

Figure 7: Locations of the on-site observations.

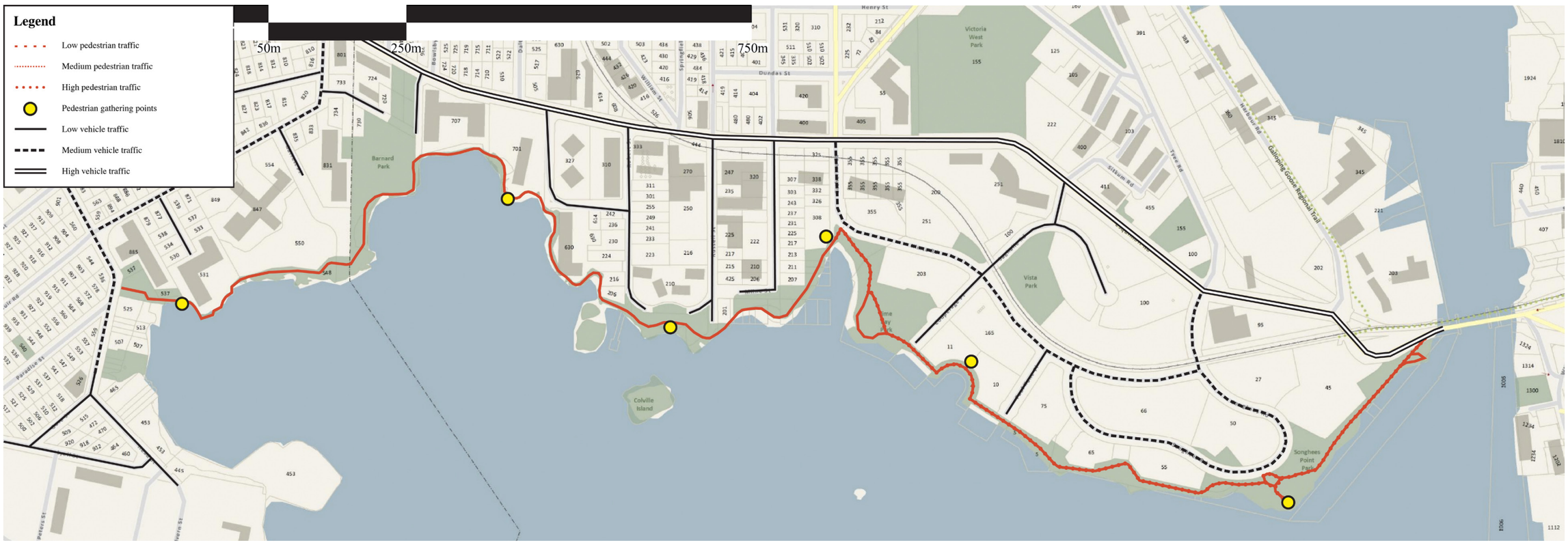

Figure 8: Pedestrian gathering points and the flow of the walkway and surrounding streets.

Table 2: Age and total number of walkway users.

Date	Weather	Site	Age of User			Total
			Child	Adult	Senior	
Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013	7°C Overcast	A	3	20	4	27
		B	3	23	1	27
		C	0	16	8	24
Sunday, Jan. 6, 2013	7°C Overcast	A	0	10	3	13
		B	0	11	5	16
		C	4	30	6	40
Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013	6°C Partial Sun, Rain	A	0	13	2	15
		B	0	4	6	10
		C	0	6	7	13

Table 3: Type of walkway user.

Date	Weather	Site	Type of User			
			Walker	Dog Walker	Runner	Other
Saturday, Jan. 5, 2013	7°C Overcast	A	16	3	9	0
		B	22	2	3	0
		C	18	3	3	0
Sunday, Jan. 6, 2013	7°C Overcast	A	9	2	2	0
		B	11	4	1	0
		C	31	3	6	0
Wednesday, Jan. 9, 2013	6°C Partial Sun, Rain	A	9	0	5	1
		B	7	2	1	0
		C	8	3	2	0

Just one week after Mayor Robinson pitched the idea, Victoria council "…agreed in principle…to rebuild the bridge in Barnard Park for $600,000…" (Times Colonist staff, October 2005). However, both municipalities were still requesting the CRD allocate some funds for the bridge and entertain the idea that the CRD take over ownership and maintenance of the Westsong Walkway (Descoteau, October 2005). This idea never gained ground, and eventually it seems to have been taken off of the table. The replacement of the bridge, however, was approved and completed in 2006, and is now a very attractive location on the Westsong Walkway.

The second controversy occurred with a landowner, Pacific National Investments Inc. (PNI). PNI had agreed to build a mixed-used development along with improvements to the Westsong Walkway in return for the City rezoning industrial land to mixed-use. After PNI developed Lime Bay Park and built a seawall section of the walkway complete with benches and lighting, the City downzoned the water lots that were originally slated for condominiums. PNI sued the City for unjust enrichment, and the Court of Appeals ruled in favour of PNI, stating that the City had no right to benefit from PNI's work without compensation and the City was required to pay for the costs associated with the construction of the walkway improvements. The water lots are still controversial, as the landowners are planning to build an international marina.

Current Projects

Five current and future projects will have an effect on the Westsong Walkway: the Johnson Street Bridge, the International Marina, a sewage treatment plant, the Roundhouse at Bayview, and the proposed development in West Bay (Figure 9). The first project is the replacement of the Johnson Street Bridge at the eastern terminus of the walkway that will be constructed by 2016. Included in the bridge replacement is a connection to the future David Foster Way (a harbour walkway on the opposite side of the Inner Harbour), the enhancement of green space at the western side of the Johnson Street Bridge, and finally the future terminus of the island commuter train, the E&N Rail. A new development on the downtown side of the Johnson Street Bridge will connect the future David Foster Way and the existing Inner Harbour walkway through a publicly accessible harbour walk. In addition, the Westsong Walkway will be able to connect to the existing, and very popular, Galloping Goose Regional Trail. The bridge replacement project is expected to create a well-used area and a gateway to and from the Westsong Walkway on the Victoria terminus. However, the Esquimalt terminus currently lacks polarity.

As mentioned above, the water lots behind the Royal Quays are slated to become an international marina. The marina is planned to have 29 environmentally friendly yacht slips. In addition, a public walkway will encircle the main buildings, a public landing dock will be provided, and a restaurant and café will be constructed. On the positive side, this marina may provide much needed vibrancy to the area. However, it is primarily slated for large vessels. In fact, the marina's own pro-development website states, "Transport Canada has insisted that the smallest boat allowed in the marina must be at least 65 feet in length" (Marina Facts, 2013). This is quite large for an area that currently has no moorage. Whether positive or negative, this is a project that has approval and therefore must be planned for appropriately.

The third important project is the treatment of wastewater in Greater Victoria. At the moment, raw sewage is discharged directly into the ocean at McLoughlin Point in Esquimalt, which, in combination with sea cabbage baking in the sun, can cause particularly bad odours on the Westsong Walkway. Once Victoria implements sewage treatment, which it has been mandated to do by 2016 the provincial government, the Westsong Walkway will be improved. The current plan will see sewage treatment occurring at McLoughlin Point with any biosolids being transported to the Hartland Landfill.

The Bayview project, as previously mentioned, is planned to be a full waterfront neighbourhood. Included in its plan is the redevelopment of the national historic Roundhouse buildings from 1913 into what is being called the "Roundhouse Retail Precinct" (Focus Equities, 2011). The original idea was to create a public market that focused on locally-grown produce. In addition, retail and entertainment was envisioned to create a social and cultural hub for Songhees residents and visitors alike. However, the City of Victoria recently approved a public market in The Hudson development downtown and local vendors have already signed on, so it may not be viable to have two competing public markets so close together.

In 2011, a development was proposed in the Esquimalt neighbourhood of West Bay. This development would be a ten-storey residential tower with ground-floor commercial, located at the intersection of Head Street, Gore Street, and Lyall Street (McCracken, 2012). While some business owners were in favour of the proposal, other owners and residents were adamantly opposed (McCracken, 2012). In response to the development, Esquimalt drafted new design guidelines for the West Bay neighbourhood. Currently, the development proposal has not moved forward.

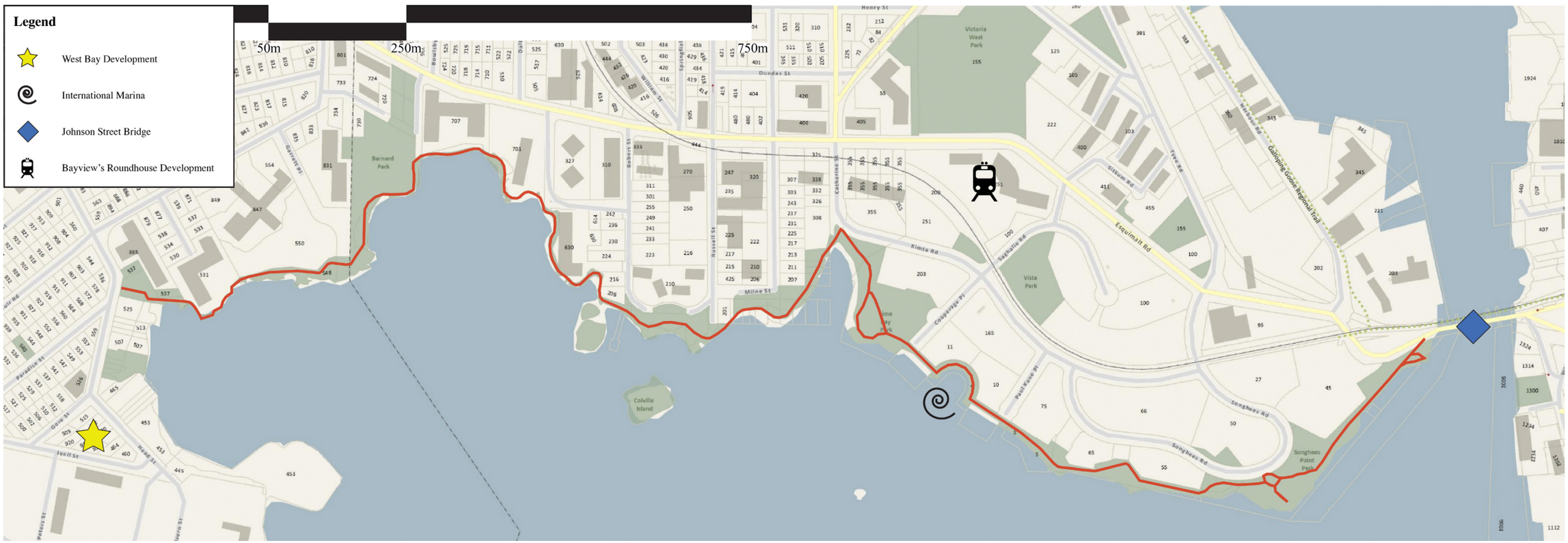

Figure 9: Proposed developments along the Westsong Walkway and in adjacent neighbourhoods.

Past Proposals

Over the years, there have also been some proposals for the walkway that never gained traction or were halted. The first occurred in 1995, when the Provincial Capital Commission put forth $12,000 for a study on "twinning" the walkway (Esquimalt News, September 1995). Twinning would consist of widening the walkway to accommodate bicycles, which are currently not allowed on the walkway. The money was to be used in conjunction with funds from Esquimalt and Victoria to study the feasibility of twinning. Hypothetically, where the path winds too much, the bicycle path could be rerouted to side streets and then brought back for the straighter sections. Initially Esquimalt had committed to aid in funding the study, but Victoria pulled its funds for the study and thus Esquimalt did the same (Jorde, October 1998). The $12,000 from the PCC was never used.

The second proposal called for extending the walking at the Esquimalt terminus and connecting it with Macaulay Point Park through land owned by the Department of National Defence (DND). This extension was to be done in three phases: Phase 1 would create a path from Macaulay Point Park to Anson Crescent for $103,000, with the province and municipality each paying half; Phase 2 would extend the path the MacLauglin Point; and Phase 3 would connect the path to the Westsong Walkway (Watts, April 2001). The various phases can be seen in Figure 10. The extension would imitate the popular Galloping Goose, in that walkers, runners, in-line skaters, and cyclists could all use it. Municipal studies showed that the walkway would benefit the whole community with improved public safety through more pedestrian traffic and reduced vandalism (Watts, July 2001). In April 2001, the project that would have "million-dollar waterfront views" (Watts, July 2001) was nearing construction with the full approval of the Canadian Forces Base in Esquimalt. However, complaints from households on Work Point were lodged with the Canadian Forces, and without the support of local leadership, "base commander Capt. Adrian Round informed the municipality the deal was off and the path was no longer welcome" (Watts, July 2001). The major reason for the complaints was that the military families enjoyed their closed community and did not want strangers walking adjacent their backyards. The project was then put on the backburner for the future, when residents may change their mind.

The final proposal involves the West Bay Marina. While a marina was constructed and is currently found at the same location, it is not the same marina that was originally proposed. In 1992, planning for the West Bay neighbourhood in Esquimalt was well underway. Ron Hunt, previous owner of West Bay Marina, envisioned a marine village with a mix of "commercial, tourist and residents' interests represented in the village" (Esquimalt News, August 1992). This vision would have phased out Hunt's own RV park, and could have included a pub, artist's space, retail, and even a fishing pier. Jim Whitter, owner of Hidden Harbour, noted the potential of West Bay especially considering the "tremendous community fabric" (Esquimalt News, August 1992). Indeed, past Alderman Rod Newman discussed the hidden potential of West Bay, "It's already an exciting area, but it has the potential to be even more exciting" (Esquimalt News, August 1992). This quote, in fact, applies to the entirety of the Westsong Walkway. In 1993, a presentation was given that called for the transformation of the West Bay shoreline into a Nova Scotia-style boardwalk, complete with coffee shops, art shops, and restaurants (Patton, June 1993). This concept would have required obtaining Department of National Defence land, as the boardwalk would end with a viewpoint at Work Point. While a plan was created, none of this diversification occurred.

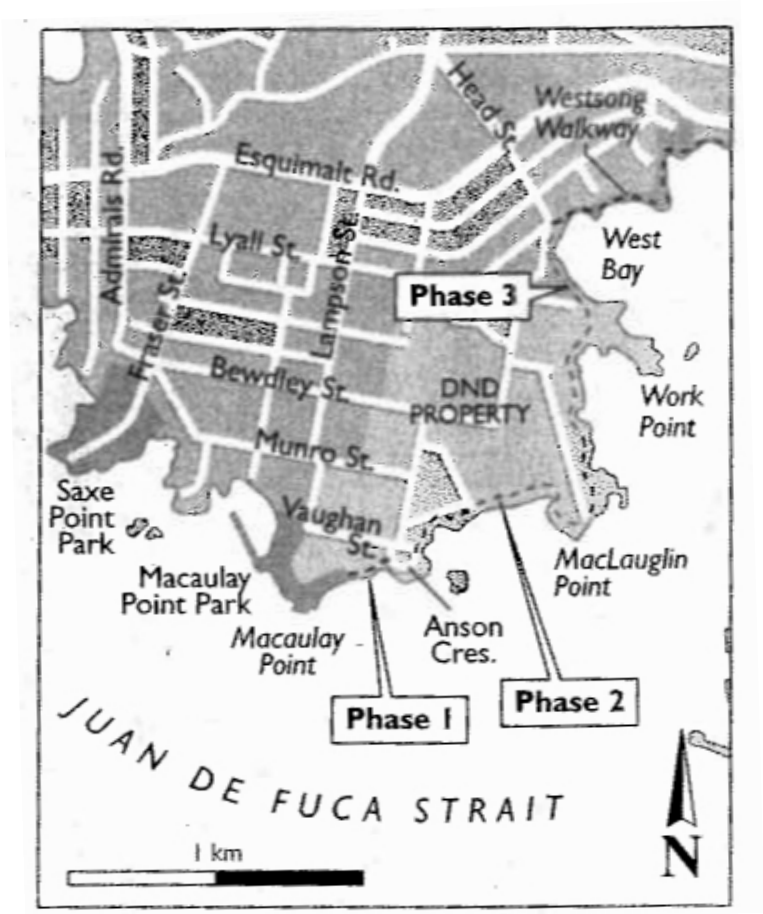

Figure 10: The proposed extension of the Westsong Walkway to Macaulay Point Park (Watts, April 2001).

5.2 Demographics

Understanding the current population of the neighbourhoods adjacent to the Westsong Walkway is crucial to understanding the context in which the walkway is located. To do so, I utilized data from the 2006 and 2011 Canadian Census. When possible, I have compared the two years; however, at this time the majority of the 2011 Census has yet to be released, and where information is missing I have relied on the 2006 Census. In analyzing these data, the pertinent boundaries were found to be the current Dissemination Areas, as they accurately conform to the neighbourhoods adjacent to the walkway. Figure 4 displays the dissemination areas as well as the names that will be used for each dissemination area within the charts. The demographic data presented here are population, age, and income.

In 2006, the population of the entire study area surrounding the Westsong Walkway was 2,675 (Table 4). The current population is 2,917 people, an increase of 8% or 242 people (Table 4). This makes sense, as the vast majority of the built environment was built prior to 2006, which will be examined in the next section. Both Esquimalt and Songhees experienced an increase in population, while Vic West W and Vic West E both experienced a decrease in population. The Swallows Landing development and the Bayview development were the main drivers behind the population growth in Esquimalt and Songhees, but it is unclear what caused the population decline in the Vic West areas.

The vast majority of residents in the study area are between the ages of 15-64 (Charts 1 & 2). In all areas except Vic West W, this age group experienced an increase in population. In fact, Vic West W experienced a drop in population across all age groups. For children aged 14 and under, Vic West E maintained its population, while every other area saw a decline in the total number of children. In the whole study area, children only make up 4% of the population, down from just 6% in 2006. This is low even for Victoria, where only 13% of the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) population is 14 and under (for reference, Canada's 14 and under population is 16.7%). This is an interesting finding, because it suggests that the area surrounding the Westsong Walkway is not well suited for children and youth. Both Esquimalt and Songhees saw an increase in the 65+ populations, while Vic West E maintained its 65+ population. The study area's 65+ population as a whole is 32.4%, compared to the 65+ population of Victoria's 65+ that is at 18.4%. If these neighbourhoods are to gain vitality and vibrancy, the population needs to be more well-rounded, which means encouraging an increase in the proportion of children and youth.

The highest income earners live within the Songhees area, both in terms of average income and median income (Charts 3 & 4). In terms of average income, Songhees doubles the second highest average income area of Vic West W. Additionally, Songhees has a 30% higher median income than that of the Victoria CMA. This is an incredibly large discrepancy, which will be discussed in the next section. In contrast, both Esquimalt and Vic West E have median incomes that are lower than that of the Victoria CMA.

Table 4: Population change in adjacent areas.

Area	2006 Population	2011 Population
Esquimalt	585	613
Vic West W	615	532
Vic West E	510	520
Songhees	965	1,252

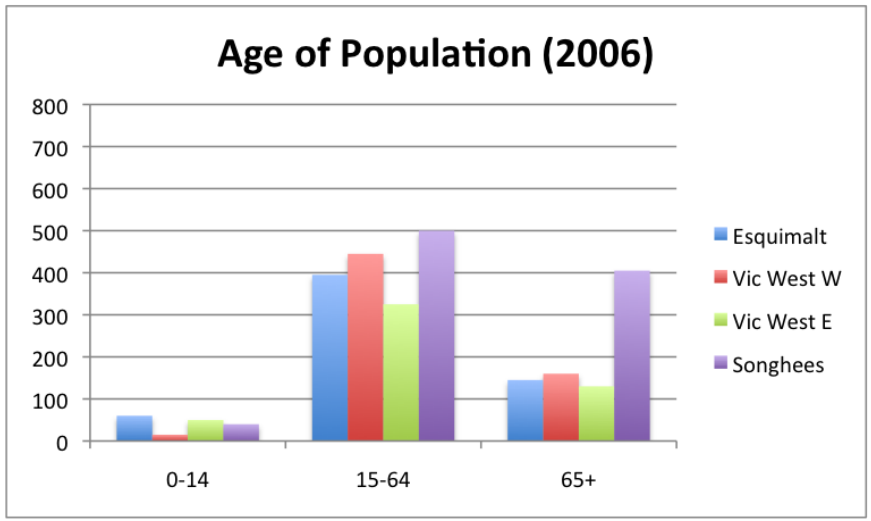

Chart 1: Age of population in 2006.

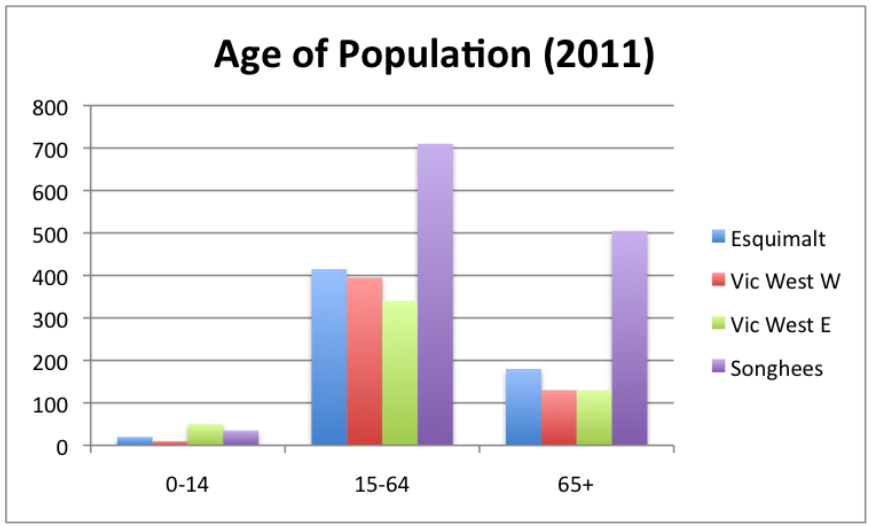

Chart 2: Age of population in 2011

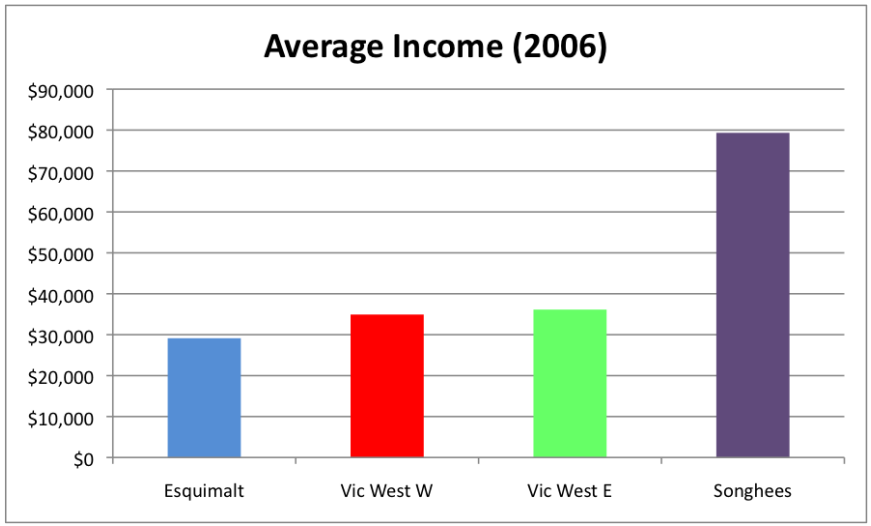

Chart 3: Average income in 2006.

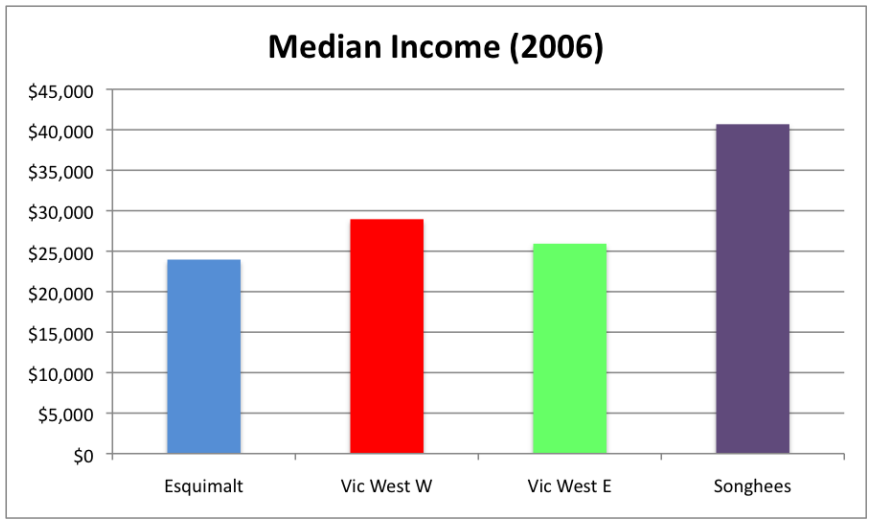

Chart 4: Median income in 2006.

5.3 Built Environment and Activities

The neighbourhoods adjacent to the walkway are mostly residential. The eastern section contains new upscale apartments and townhouses with the main tenure being condominiums; the middle provides older apartments, tenured both by condominiums and renters; and the western section provides apartments and single detached houses. In addition, there is a small hub of light industry located around the middle of the walkway. Other than a local pub and the West Bay Marina (which includes private and public moorage, a floathome village, an RV park, and a public restaurant), there are few commercial activities along the Westsong Walkway, which makes this a prime area for revitalization.

In terms of municipal zoning, the Victoria section is primarily residential, with a small area zoned for light industry and a few limited commercial zones. In Esquimalt, the zones surrounding the walkway are mainly residential, with some commercial and marine commercial. In the area where an extension would occur, there is zoning for petroleum storage and for a sewage handling facility.

Some very clear patterns emerge when one examines the housing stock in the neighbourhoods adjacent to the Westsong Walkway. In terms of age of housing (Chart 5), the vast majority in Songhees was built from 1986-2006, and before 1971 was completely undeveloped. This is in complete contrast to the other sections. The majority of housing in Esquimalt and Vic West W was built prior to 1981, and no new housing was built between 1991-2006 in Esquimalt and between 1996-2006 in Vic West W. In Vic West E, the majority of housing was built between 1971-1990, and no new housing was built between 1996-2006. In all sections, the majority of housing type is apartments five storeys and up (Charts 6 & 7). Between 2006 and 2011, both Esquimalt and Songhees saw a rise in the number of this type of dwelling, while Vic West W saw a decline. Apartments under five stories is the next highest dwelling type in all sections, and single-detached, semi-detached, row houses, and duplexes all remain relatively low in each section.

The large increase in housing in Songhees showcases a pattern of high-income residents moving into the section. The new housing that was built and is currently being built in this area is designed for higher incomes that can afford the views and proximity to downtown. For instance, the newest development in Songhees, Bayview Place, is designed to be a 20-acre waterfront community with high-end apartments, a luxury hotel, a senior's residence, and spa-like amenities.

One of Victoria's most expensive properties is the penthouse at Bayview Place, priced at $4.092 million, topping even most single-family dwellings (Palmer, 2013). However, Bayview is not the only expensive property along the Westsong Walkway. In fact, Esquimalt's most expensive residential property is also located on the walkway—a $2.6 million penthouse at Swallow's Landing (Palmer, 2013). These examples demonstrate just how valuable an oceanfront view can be.

Another interesting trend is the walkability of the neighbourhoods. WalkScore is a website designed to measure the walkability of a place by providing a score out of 100 based on its proximity to nearby amenities (Walk Score, 2013). Walk Score also is testing a beta version of Street Smart Walk Score, which determines walkability by streets, rather than its usual method of straight-line distance. According to Street Smart Walk Score, the Songhees neighbourhood has a high score of 72 (out of 100), which translates to very walkable, most likely due to its proximity to downtown. Songhees also has an incredibly high score of 95 for cycling. As one moves west along the walkway, the Walkscore decreases. At Rainbow Park, the walkscore is 59, which is only "somewhat walkable", and

only a 57 for cycling. On the other hand, the West Bay area in Esquimalt has a score of 52, again only "somewhat walkable". In order to increase polarity on the walkway, the Esquimalt terminus needs more amenities, which would also increase its walkability.

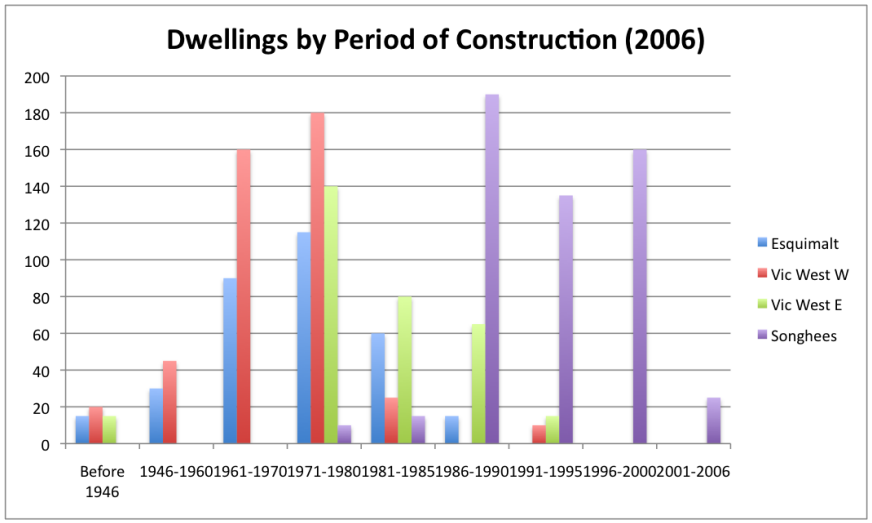

Chart 5: Dwellings by period of construction in 2006.

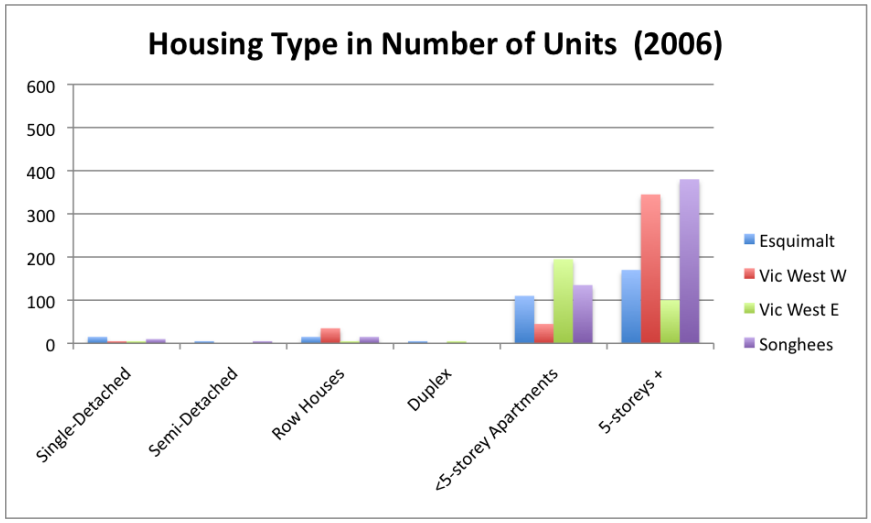

Chart 6: Housing type in 2006.

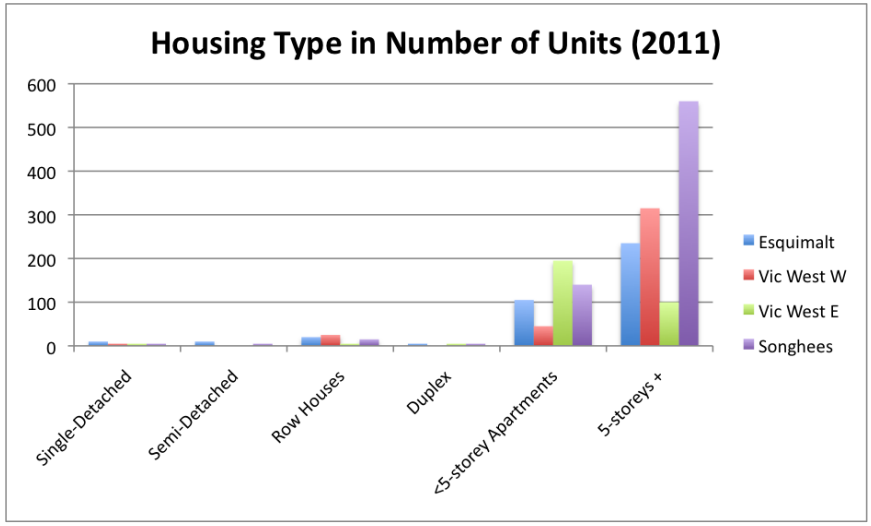

Chart 7: Housing type in 2011.

5.4 Current Official Plans

A number of city plans have relevance to the future of the Westsong Walkway. The following section outlines the plans that are relevant to the future of the Westsong Walkway. In Victoria the Official Community Plan, Greenways Plan, Harbour Plan, and Roundhouse Design Guidelines are relevant, while in Esquimalt the Official Community Plan and the Draft West Bay Design Guidelines are relevant. In both areas, zoning maps are important.

Victoria's Official Community Plan

The City of Victoria produced its newest Official Community Plan (OCP) in 2012, the main purpose being to guide policies and development towards a sustainable city by 2041. The walkway and adjacent neighbourhoods are located within the "urban core" and closest to the Victoria West urban village (p.17). While the Victoria West urban village is within walking distance, the plan fails to take into account the barrier that is Esquimalt Road, an arterial street. It seems appropriate to develop a small urban village within the Songhees, which is designated as an "urban place" (p.36). The Songhees and Victoria West village are also designated as second (out of four) in terms of planning priority, meaning changes are viable to occur in the near future.

In terms of transportation, pedestrians are officially given the highest priority followed closely by cyclists. The OCP also states that it will "Maintain the City's Greenways Plan as a policy framework for an integrated, hierarchical greenway network" (p.58). The Greenways Plan will be discussed in the next section.

The OCP also has a number of placemaking and urban design objectives that apply to enhancing the walkway and adjacent neighbourhoods. For instance, 8(b) states, "That the views from the public realm of existing landmarks are maintained, and that new landmarks are introduced to enhance the visual identity and appearance of Victoria and to improve wayfinding around the city" (p.65). More specifically, one of the more specific goals notes, "Consider urban design improvements along and near the Core Songhees waterfront as part of local area planning" (p.66).

Victoria's Greenways Plan

The purpose of the City of Victoria (2003) Greenways Plan is to "to establish a Greenway system throughout the City of Victoria… over the next 50 years" (p.2). The City of Victoria prioritizes its allocation of resources for greenways when no special action is needed, with enhancing existing greenways being the last priority. The plan notes many benefits of greenways that will be expanded upon in the literature review, such as economic, health, social, environmental, and recreational. According to the Greenways Plan, the Westsong Walkway would be considered a "People Only Greenway", which is categorized for only allowing, "pedestrians, bicycles, and other non-motorized rolling traffic" (p.10). While the minimum standard for sidewalk width is 1.5m on greenways, the plan calls for widening wherever possible to provide multi-modality in an effort to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists, "except where overriding ecological, topographical or space constraints exist" (p.5). In fact, the plan notes, "a right of way width of up to 7.0 m is desirable" in an effort to separate modes of traffic (p.10). So, while enhancing existing greenways may not be the main priority, it may become a higher priority if the enhancements were to accommodate more users as this could be considered a special action.

The Greenways Plan has a number of recommended enhancements that apply to the Westsong Walkway. For all greenways the plan recommends public art; street furniture; interpretive, educational, and directional signage; and different ground surfaces to enhance

wayfinding, connectivity, and aesthetics (p.9). Where safe and non-destructive, the plan recommends providing access to bodies of water, such as those found on the Westsong Walkway.

In general implementation, the City of Victoria commits to working with "neighbouring municipalities to ensure coordination and that Greenway connections between municipalities are seamless" (p.14). Unfortunately, this is currently not the case on the Westsong Walkway, as both Victoria and Esquimalt have different names for the walkway, and different styles (for instance, Esquimalt and Victoria have different lighting in which Victoria's lighting is much more aesthetic than it is practical).

Finally, the plan notes a number of possible funding sources and partnerships due to the City's tight budget and lack of resources. For funding sources, the plan notes a number of organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Van City Credit Union, and the Provincial Capital Commission. The City can receive anywhere from $15,000 to $1,000,000 through these organizations for greenways. Additionally, the plan recommends partnering with businesses and other organizations such as allowing "sponsorship" of greenway sections.

Victoria's Harbour Plan

In 2001, the City of Victoria created the Harbour Plan "to provide direction and certainty for land uses and marine dependent activities in and around the Victoria Harbour" (p.1). With a large variety of activities occurring in and around the harbour, the plan seeks to prevent and mitigate any potential conflicts.

One of the long-term goals of the City has been to develop a continuous harbour pathway. Although Work Point is in Esquimalt and under federal jurisdiction, pressure from the City of Victoria in pursuing a continuous harbour path could lead to positive steps toward the completion of the previously planned extension. Similarly, the Harbour Plan notes that along some walkways, "signs marking access points and en route "way finding" are missing" (p.18). In addition, the Harbour Plan recommends improvements to existing walkways along the lines of those seen in the Greenways Plan: 7-8m width, multi-modal, accessible to all people, and wherever possible provide access to the water.

The ecological value along the Barnard Park to Lime Bay Park strip of the Westsong Walkway is considered "High – Very High" (p.13). This means the plan recognizes the diversity of species and habitat, the naturalness of the area, and the importance of the shoreline to the various species. The lack of alteration to the shorelines is one of the main reasons this area has remained as "High – Very High". At the same time, the Victoria section of the Westsong Walkway alone has ten storm drain outfalls, three of which contain high levels of fecal coliform, and one of which contains high levels of metal and organic contaminants. One fecal coliform outfall and five storm drain outfalls are located in the area that has "High – Very High" ecological value (Figure 11).

With specific regard to the Songhees area, the Harbour Plan recommends the introduction of commercial and marine-related activities in order to create a local destination. Additionally, the plan notes that "non-pedestrian uses have been temporarily banned due to the perception that bike and pedestrian uses conflict" (p.26). This is interesting, because temporary implies that with the right information and pressure multi-modal activities could be permitted on the walkway. The plan recommends "[designing] improvements with stakeholders, for the portion of the Songhees

pathway extending between Ocean Point Resort to Spinnaker's Pub, to resolve pedestrian and bicycle conflict" (p.26). While originally Victoria rejected the idea of twinning the walkway, the Harbour Plan implies that in 2001 the will was there, and may still be there today.

Victoria's Songhees Design Guidelines

The Policy Plan and Design Guidelines for the Songhees Area in Victoria West was created by the City of Victoria in 1986 with its most recent amendment occurring in 2008. In 1986, much of Songhees was still vacant, so its main purpose was in creating a neighbourhood village with shopping and services as a focal point. Additionally, it called for a public waterfront that with vibrancy provided through a mix of adjacent land uses. Like the Harbour Plan, these guidelines called for a mixture of modes of transportation – in other words, allowing bicyclists on the walkway.

The Policy Plan and Design Guidelines also provides a number of recommendations for public pathways, such as the Westsong Walkway. For instance, the width of a walkway should be enough for two couples to pass (in many areas along the walkway it is not). Additionally, the use of different paving materials to provide variety along the walkway was recommended. Water access was again a prominent feature, this time noting the variety of types of access to the water: "promenade pier, temporary and long-term moorage, canoe launching, pebble beaches and fishing" (p.9).

The public waterfront was created, but it never achieved its vibrancy due to a lack of commerce. The International Marina has a chance at improving vibrancy in and around its location, but the rest of the walkway at this time will not be improved. Indeed, the Songhees has become primarily residential, but there is still hope for a commercial centre at the Roundhouse through the Bayview development.

Esquimalt's Official Community Plan

The Township of Esquimalt completed its Official Community Plan in 2007, and its most recent amendment occurred in 2012. The purpose is to guide future growth while maintaining Esquimalt's "small town ambience" (p.2). The OCP identifies West Bay as a distinct neighbourhood within Esquimalt. Within West Bay, the West Bay Harbour is identified as a commercial node, with goals for it to become a "marine-oriented commercial village, serving regional marine traffic, local residents and tourists" (p.20). While the Township supports development in West Bay, it must also "be compatible with adjacent residential areas" (p.51).

The OCP has plans for the possible extension of the Westsong Walkway to Macaulay Point Park. Esquimalt plans to create a general concept plan for a neighbourhood should the federal lands in the area ever become divested. Additionally, the OCP states that, The development of a regional sewage treatment facility at Macaulay Point is considered to be inconsistent with the development of a future neighbourhood in the Macaulay Point – Work Point area and historically has not been supported by the Township (p.24).

Indeed, a regional sewage plant and a public walkway may not be the most compatible of land uses. In terms of transportation, Esquimalt is committed to increasing the modal share of both cycling and walking. This is again a good sign that twinning the walkway may be a potential enhancement.

Esquimalt is also committed to maintaining existing views public access to saltwater, as well as improving access opportunities. Esquimalt "supports the continued usage of the Westsong (West Bay) Walkway as a scenic pedestrian linkage to the City of Victoria" (p.44).

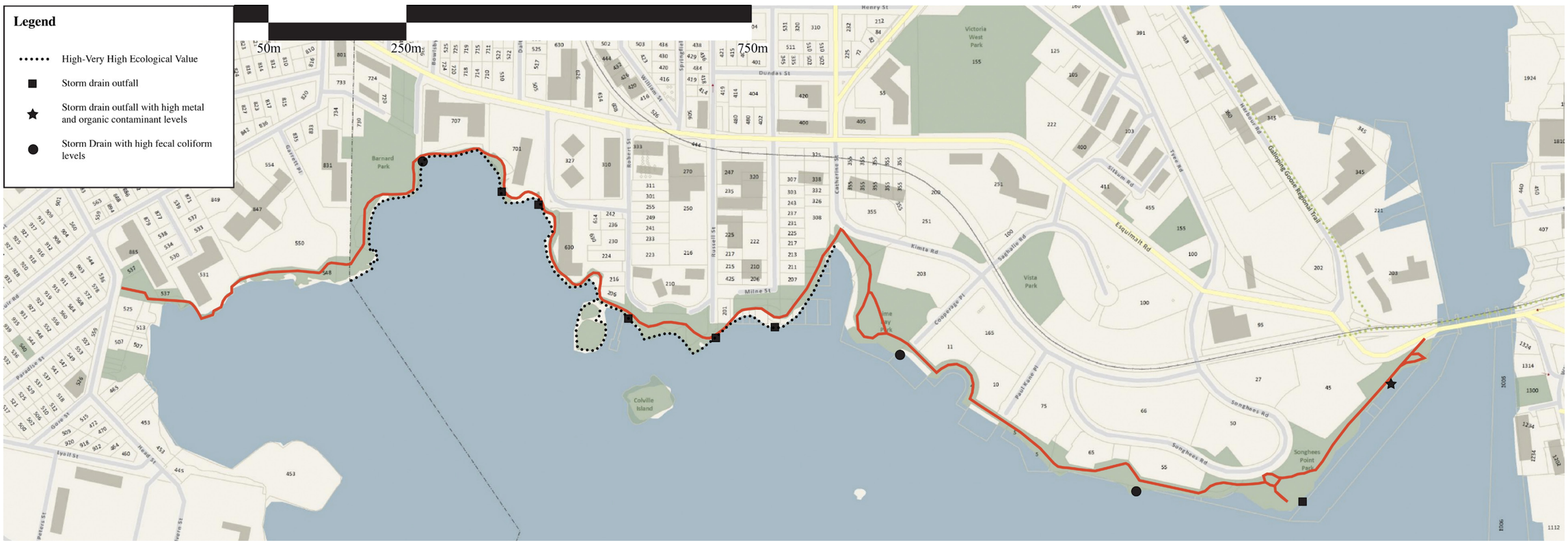

Figure 11: Locations of storm drain outfalls contrasted with sections of ecological value.

Overall, the Official Community Plan for the Township of Esquimalt has positive plans for the future of the Westsong Walkway and the adjacent neighbourhoods.

Esquimalt's Draft West Bay Design Guidelines

The Township of Esquimalt's Draft West Bay Design Guidelines were created in response to a development proposal that did not fit the character of the neighbourhood. Esquimalt recognized that West Bay was a unique area that needed its own separate design guidelines. The general guidelines call for maintaining the land and water linkages, providing easy access to Victoria Harbour and to the water in general, and locating landmarks at the end of street vistas. Additionally, the guidelines call for "the mixed use commercial component along Head Street [to] read as a hybrid between a 'high street' in a village a [sic] small scale esplanade featuring public access points to the edge of the Bay" (p.5). This "high street" would run from the end of the Westsong Walkway to Lyall Street.

The guidelines also recommend analyzing whether Head Street should be turned into a one-way street to accommodate angled parking. This could also benefit aesthetics and thus give people more of a reason to continue on into Esquimalt from the end of the walkway. Street furniture in West Bay should be coordinated in design, and lighting should be of nautical theme. Signage should be "made of natural materials" and "reflect the ocean front nature of West Bay" (p.12). It is recommended that the waterfront be animated with activities for residents and visitors.

Protecting views is a major component of the design guidelines. In fact, views from other areas are taken into account: "No building should pop above the line of horizon behind West Bay when viewed from Victoria Harbour" (p.6). Taller buildings may be allowed if they help frame a view. Indeed, the maximum height in West Bay is recommended to be 30m, or approximately 10 storeys.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE

The Westsong Walkway is a linear public open space that traverses primarily urban areas. Its eastern terminus is set on the edge of Victoria's downtown core; it travels through high-density apartment neighbourhoods; and comes to an end in a low-density residential neighbourhood in Esquimalt. Esquimalt itself has elements of suburbia, but for the most part would be considered an urban area. For this reason, I have chosen to classify the Westsong Walkway as an urban linear waterfront park. A scan of the relevant literature was undertaken, focusing on urban public open space.

This chapter summarizes the state of the debate on public open space, with specific reference to public waterfronts, through developing an understanding of trends and patterns in scholarly and professional discussions. Many positive benefits are associated with reinventing and reanimating public open space, such as healthy communities and an improved sense of place. Although there is no cookie-cutter method to reanimating public open space (nor should there be), strategies and processes that should be followed in order to be successful can be unearthed.

Public Open Space

Public space is a significant component to the morphology of cities and suburbs. But what is considered "public space"? Hajer and Reijndorp (2001) define public space as "space that is freely accessible for everyone" (p.11). Examples of public spaces include streets and sidewalks, parks, and squares, all of which must be in the public ownership. In other words, public space must not be privately owned, which will be discussed in detail later. The importance of accessible public space is clear, as it encourages chance encounters, and "fulfils an important role in increasing the 'social cohesion' in society" (Hajer & Reijndorp, 2001, p.8). Therefore, public space planning plays a crucial role in creating a socialized society in urban environments.

In order to understand the current debate on public open space, one must first have a general understanding of public open space. This includes the reasons as to why urban public open space has been particularly successful. It should be noted that not all urban public open spaces successes. But for the sake of this paper, the realities have been simplified, and as such the exceptions, of which there are many, have been ignored.

In the 19th century, urban environments experienced exponential population growth and as such the amount of open spaces significantly decreased. This had negative effects on the health of urban dwellers, due mainly in part to pollution from human and industrial waste. In fact, it was these health concerns that initially sparked the need for the modern urban planning profession. In regards to the lack of open space, two options were created: plan for public open space within the cities or escape the city to what would be early the suburbs. These two environments evolved very differently from each other. Public open space in urban environments became relatively successful, with parks dominating the people's desires. On the other hand, public open space in suburban environments has never been quite as successful, and many of the spaces are now desolate and sometimes dangerous.

Urban public open space can be construed as a success, especially in comparison to suburban public open space, as it generally is well used and appreciated. Indeed, in a statement about power and gaining the support of the public, infamous planner Robert Moses described people's desire for parks: "As long as you're on the side of parks, you're on the side of the angels. You can't lose" (Caro, 1974). Put simply, people loved parks so much that they were willing to

ignore most of Moses' terrible planning policies. While there are definitely exceptions, urban public open space seems to be a success. But why is this the case? I will discuss three reasons for the success of urban public open space: densities, armature, and necessity.

In her classic book, The Death and Life of Great American Cities, Jane Jacobs (1961) describes the conditions that create successful neighbourhoods, and by relation, successful public realms. The mixed-use, high density urban areas create easy transitions from the public to private and also sustain the necessary amount of people to create a sense of security. She noted that more people in public spaces increases the 'eyes on the street', which decreases the chances of socially unacceptable behaviour (Jacobs, 1961). The number of people and the sense of security together create a positive feedback loop, continually increasing people and safety by association. Public spaces are therefore rarely empty in these neighbourhoods, increasing safety and the number of chance encounters, and thus making the spaces a success.

A simplified way of looking at any city is to break it up into its main components. Bill Erickson (2001) developed a method that would allow planners and architects to analyze and define the problem, whilst being able to put forth solutions that are flexible and adaptable. These two methods are called the grid and the urban armature, and it is the armature that I will discuss in detail, as it is most pertinent to this project. The urban armature method splits the city into two distinct urban elements: armature and fabric. Armature is defined as "the principal elements…that will have a strong significant influence on the form, structure, or use of the city" (Erickson, 2001, p. 21). In other words, armature is the elements such as main and arterial roads, community buildings, landmarks, and public spaces. These elements define the development of cities, and in most cases the armature remains whilst the environment surrounding it is much more dynamic and constantly in flux. In contrast, the urban fabric is defined as "the bulk of urban elements whose detailed configuration will not dramatically influence the overall pattern or use of the city" (Erickson, 2001, p.21). These elements include residential roads, houses, apartments blocks, and other structures that remain similar from city to city. An easy way of identifying the elements is to define the armature of a city, and then define the fabric as everything else. This method of defining the city is "a useful model, both as a way of understanding the city and as an aid to design" (Erickson, 2001, p.21).

Large parks are idealized, and massive, expensive development tends to occur directly on its edges (more on this later). These parks are often sought out as destinations and are well used, whether for pre-programmed events or just an escape from the chaos of the city. In a city, public open space is very much the armature around which the fabric is developed.

Linear parks and greenways are "parks along rivers, streams, ridgelines or historic infrastructure corridors such as canals or railroads that shape urban form and connect people with places" (Lindsey et al., 2008, p.53). Linear parks with higher traffic are located in high density neighbourhoods, areas with high household income and high levels of education, areas with a middle-aged population, and areas with high commercial use and parking (Lindsey et al., 2008). As was seen in the Westsong Walkway context, the Songhees neighbourhood was the most well used and it has both the highest household income and largest middle-aged population.

The Public Realm

In discussing public space it is crucial to define the public realm, of

which there are a number of similar definitions. When discussing the public realm Erickson (2001) notes, "'public' should not be thought of as public ownership but rather pieces of collective interest or shared activity" (p.30). Similarly, Hajer & Reijndorp define the public realm as "places where an exchange between different social groups is possible and actually occurs" (p.11) and as such, the public realm is not a physical entity, but more experiential and cultural. These definitions show that the public realm is not solely associated with public space, and in fact can occupy private spaces. It's also important to note that exchange or encounters both play a critical role in the public realm. As such, Southworth & Parthasarathy (1996) define the public realm as "…a sphere of broad and largely unplanned encounters where individuals give up their right to total sovereignty" (p.246). In this sense, successful private spaces such as shopping centers, theatres, and cafés all have public realms. This has led to the privatization of the public realm, and as such, the design of public open spaces has at times been transferred to the hands of private developers (Hajer & Reijndorp, 2001).

Private spaces being in the public realm is not inherently bad, as it has the potential to reinforce public spaces. For instance, a local pub acts as a private, third-space in the public realm and can also benefit the public spaces of the streets and sidewalks by increasing the pedestrian presence, and subsequently the 'eyes on the street' (Southworth & Parthasarathy, 1996; Jacobs, 1961). Similarly, people of all walks of life can come together for something as simple as watching a hockey or baseball game. In fact, in an effort to increase the length of stay by patrons, shopping malls have begun holding events and shows, and even mimicking the circulation patterns of town centers, all of which encourages socialization. On the negative side, the public realm is becoming increasingly privatized, and it is doing so in conjunction with consumerism.

However, the current trend seems to be that materialism and technology are allowing people to retreat within private spaces and miss the encounters that are so crucial to the success of the public realm. This can have detrimental effects to society as a whole, as the retreat into the private sphere only reinforces one's views on the world and can lead to isolation and loneliness (Southworth & Parthasarathy, 1996). In addition, the increase of private spaces in the public realm has direct negative effects on the rights of the people in the spaces. In public space, people have the right to assembly and the right to free speech. In private space, a person's rights are very limited, and any diversion from the rules can result in that person's removal from the grounds. In fact, certain types of people, such as homeless and skateboarders, are banned from private spaces. In a society where all people are supposed to be treated fair and equal, the public realm should not exist solely in private spaces. This showcases the necessity for the provision of public spaces with public realms that are accessible to all members of society. Therefore, it is more important than ever to expand and revitalize existing public spaces.

Benefits of Public Open Space & the Public Realm

In order to promote the cause for public open space revitalization and expansion, the benefits must be made clear.

While most cities realize there is a social benefit to parks and open space, not often realized are the monetary benefit, parks provide to cities: they have a positive benefit on adjacent real estate and property values. This is called the proximate principle, which emerged from Frederick Law Olmsted's work on convincing policy makers to construct Central Park (Crompton, 2001). As such, the proximate principle has since been used as a method of monetizing parks. John L. Crompton (2001) performed a review of the literature with regards to the proximate principle and gathered interesting results.

The premise is that residents are willing to pay more for a property located adjacent or near a park, thus the appraised property value increases, and cities receive more money through an increase in property taxes (Crompton, 2001).

In fact, the increased tax revenue provided by properties located near parks could be enough to offset the original debt acquired by the city in constructing and maintaining the park. In some cases, the park may become profitable after the original debt is paid off (Crompton, 2001). The case for the monetary benefits of parks also does not include possible provincial or federal grants, which would offset the original debt quicker and thus make a park profitable sooner.

The type of park and type of activities will have varying benefits on the property values. For example, "Large flat open spaces…are much less preferred than natural areas containing woods, hills, ponds, or marsh" (Crompton, 2001, p.6). In other words, natural landscapes attract higher property values than parks with recreational activities such as tennis courts and baseball diamonds.

Of course, the benefit of parks on property values decreases as distance away from the park increases. Studies found that the upper limit for monetary benefits of a park is between 2500 and 3000 feet (762-914 meters) away from a park (Crompton, 2001; Hammer et al., 1974). Hammer et al. (1974) noted that distance from a park was more accurate using distance along public streets rather than straight-line distance. A very general figure for discerning a parks benefit to properties notes that properties directly adjacent to a park may see an increase of 20%, which is considered low "if the park is large…well-maintained, attractive and its use is mainly passive" (Crompton, 2001, p. 29). Similarly, Hammer et al. (1974) found that the benefit of park location in dollars per acre on properties is "$11,500 at 40 feet to $1,000 at 2,500 feet" (p.277). Accounting for inflation, this would be $68,065 at 40 feet and $4,391 at 2,500 feet – an incredible amount.

Properties that back onto a park do not see the same kind of benefits as those that front onto a park. These properties may have associated perceptions of a decline in privacy due to the proximity of the backyard to a park. Other cases where the proximate principle does not take affect include: poorly maintained parks, parks with poor visibility from the street, which encourages anti-social behaviour (Crompton, 2001).

It should be noted that a linear park with the same total area as a rectangular park actually has greater benefits, as its increased edge can reach a greater number of properties (i.e. more properties can be adjacent)(Crompton, 2001). Linear parks and greenways are also interesting in that if they are narrow and winding the proximate principle of increased property values may not apply because the views may not be as good as those facing a large open park. In fact, "enhanced property value associated with greenways of this nature is likely to come from access to the linear trail, rather than from the views of nature or open space" (Crompton, 2001b, p.116). This is interesting, because the area of the Westsong Walkway with the highest income and subsequently highest property value (the Songhees area) is the area with the easiest access to the walkway and the most open space. Despite linear parks contributing to property values, residents may not be in favour of the greenways. Concerns relate to the arrival of a new, non-local population that traverses through the neighbourhood. However, Crompton (2001b) notes that these concerns are unsupported by the empirical literature, and often times linear parks become better neighbours than the residents expected.

While an increase in property values in beneficial to a city from a monetary perspective, it might lead to negative effects. For instance, long-term residents may be priced-out of their own neighbourhoods with the increase in taxes. Similarly, residents who are not looking to move may see no benefit in the increase of property values, and only see it as an increase in property taxes (Crompton, 2001). However, overall a well-used park that is maintained will be appreciated more in the community, and thus more desirable. Therefore, long-term investments can be both enhanced and ensured with the provision of a high-quality public realm.

An improved public realm also has the benefit of contributing to social capital. Indeed, the increase in social interactions can play a pivotal role in creating social ties that ultimately create a setting for healthy behaviour (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005). This relates directly to the ability of parks and public open spaces to diminish issues of neighbourhood safety, and strengthens the case for revitalizing underutilized public spaces. Spaces that have low population turnover also do not have the natural deterrents to socially unacceptable behaviours and therefore reanimating a park would increase the eyes on the street and discourage anti-social behaviours. In fact, studies have shown that increased greenery can lead to decreased crime, decreased aggression and violence, and increased social interaction (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005).

Perhaps the most obvious benefits of parks and public space are its health benefits. The most often discussed of these benefits relate to an increase in greenery that aids in a reduction in air pollution and in diminishing the urban heat island effect. Two other benefits for human health are the psychological and physical health benefits. With regards to psychological benefits, parks can be directly attributed to a decrease in anxiety, sadness, and stress for those who spend time within the parks (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005). It is not just those who visit the park that benefit from it, though. Studies have found that "people place value on the existence of parks even when they do not use them" and that "'having the park there' is the biggest source of pleasure for residents living near a small park" (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005, p.161). Indeed, it is also widely known that physical activity can have positive benefits on depression, and some of the main activities that occur in parks are related to physical exercise. A good park can contribute to a rise in physical activity, which can "reduce morbidity and mortality by decreasing heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, colon cancer, feelings of depression/ anxiety, and weight, while building and maintaining healthy bones, muscles, and joints" (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005, p. 159). Overall, the health benefits associated with parks are astounding, and combined with the social, environmental, and economical benefits, prove to be a very strong argument in favour of cities to create, maintain, and revitalize parks.

Revitalizing Public Open Space & the Public Realm

There is no sole solution that can suffice to reanimating existing underutilized public open space. And Hajer & Reijndorp (2001) make an important point, "merely imitating the formal characteristics of successful public spaces is…looking for the solution in the wrong place" (p.112). Therefore, only a combination of a variety of strategies would truly be a success for reanimating public open space. Listed below are a number of strategies from the literature for reanimating public open space, and for simplicity they have been split up the various strategies, despite the necessity for a variety of strategies.

The first step to improve use of public space is therefore through the reduction of existing barriers, and one of the biggest impediments to use of public space is access. Access not only refers to the ability

to get to a public space, but also the ability to move within a public space. In terms of arriving at the public space, William Whyte (1988) noted that approximately 80% of park users arrive from a radius of just three blocks. Additionally, heavy traffic such as those found on arterial roads can increase the effect of a barrier. In order to attract people from further away, traffic calming measures should be used to slow down arterial roads and make neighbourhoods more walkable. However, increasing access to linear parks is not as simple as providing more connecting roads, because "intersections on access routes act in some ways as barriers to use…potentially increasing travel time to trails" (Lindsey et al., 2008, p. 75). Therefore, access with regards to linear parks has more to do with access within the park. Access within a public space means that these spaces should be easily navigable. Maps that display where points of interest are an easy solution to a confusing space. In the case of linear parks, maps should identify walking distances in both time and measured distance. Additionally, linear parks must have polarity in order for people to be drawn throughout.

There are small design changes that can improve the public realm. For instance, when designing buildings, the thresholds between the public and private, such as porches, stairs, and entrances, should be enhanced to blur the lines between public and private realms. With regards to the larger physical changes, Southworth & Parthasarathy (1996) recommend changes that relate to the successful neighbourhoods Jane Jacobs wrote about. The most obvious strategies to improve the public realm and public spaces would be to increase densities and change single-use zoning into mixed-use zoning, which would involve regulatory changes. Additionally, public spaces should be designed and improved in an effort to accommodate public uses and connectivity between streets.

A similar strategy undertaken in Bellevue, Washington, saw residents reclaim the public realm through a network of open spaces (Girling & Helphand, 1997). The key to this reclamation was to transform open spaces from spaces that one moves through into spaces that are used for recreation and education, in addition to movement. Bellevue was also able to transform an existing retail power center into a downtown by implementing design guidelines and changing zoning to be more accommodating of mixed-uses. This type of transformation has the potential to vastly improve public spaces and the public realm. A transformation such as this one would provide the density and mixed-use zoning to fully support public open spaces, because more people would be able to live, work, and play within their neighbourhood.

In designing and improving public spaces, special attention should be provided to the aesthetics and maintenance. Users are far more likely to utilize a space if it provides an interesting and beautiful setting. In terms of aesthetics, spaces should be designed with the following issues in mind: "its layout, landscaping, the balance between sun and shade, ease of access…and other aesthetic features such as ponds or sculptures" (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005, p.165). Maintenance is also an important factor is making a space interesting and beautiful, as "users are more likely to visit a park where the features are maintained on a regular basis and shun those places containing elements that are in disrepair" (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005, p.164). In fact, a poorly maintained park can also have a negative effect on the perception of the space's safety. If a space is deemed unsafe, whether by a perception or objectively, then it will not be well used.

While Southworth & Parthasarathy (1996, 1997) have physical design recommendations, they also put forth a warning that the physical change will not solely improve the public realm, and "such a premise

is highly problematic as it reduces the public realm to a physically determined entity, overlooking much of its social complexity" (p.10). Public spaces do not inherently have a public realm, and one of the solutions to reanimating underutilized public open space would be to enhance the public realm. Indeed, Kevin Lynch (1981) notes, "the quality of a place is due to the joint effect of the place and the society which occupies it" (p.111). In improving the public realm, Hajer & Reijndorp (2001) have three strategies: theming, compressing, and connecting. Theming and compressing are in effect creating destinations for certain groups of people. These two do not have to be purely physical, and can in fact be simply programming of events within public spaces. Connecting, on the other hand, is about how different places relate to each other (Hajer & Reijndorp, 2001). In this sense, connecting is about bringing together people from different spheres through the physical design of space. However, it is also about connecting the realms of the public and the private. This is especially important for its relation to third spaces, such as pubs and cafes, which often act as the public realm.

Erickson (2001) outlines a solution in regards to urban armature and fabric. The urban armature model is not only useful as a way to define the city, but also "as an aid to design" (Erickson, 2001, p.23). In new developments, the urban armature should be developed in a way so that a core is defined and thus allowing the surrounding areas to evolve naturally. The urban armature therefore acts as the "principal elements of the built environment involved with movement, activity and cultural meanings" (Erickson, 2001, p.28). In theory, this is an excellent solution; designers simply need to focus on creating the armature and the fabric will follow. To do this, these public open spaces must be perceived as axes of movement, activity, or culture, and this is accomplished through destination planning.

Destination planning, which includes marketing and programming, has the potential to increase the activity that occurs within public open spaces. Put simply, destination planning is creating a space that people are drawn to and will specifically go out of their way to get to it. There are big destinations like Central Park in New York, but there are also smaller destinations like a popular local park. What makes these places destinations are the things one can do within the space; it is vital to create an interesting experience for the user (Hajer & Reijndorp, 2001). In improving the public realm, Punter (1990) recommends, "more licensing of activities…and the provision of wider ranges of leisure and entertainment in the streets themselves" (p.15). Indeed, the first step to reanimating underutilized public open spaces is to get people using them, and to do this one has to remove any negative stigma and entice people to come through clever marketing and events. Events could be regularly scheduled programs or could be one-time events, such as a race or concert (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005). Creating a diversity of uses within a park is a sure fire method of ensuring its use year-round (Bedimo-Rung et al., 2005).

Reanimating public open space is a difficult task for any planner or designer. Yet, it is necessary to halt the current trend towards complete privatization, which has negative attributes attached to it. Many of the strategies put forth in this paper would also have ancillary benefits, such as environmental benefits from decreased vehicle trips through mixed-use development and more walkable neighbourhoods. It is important that any strategies undertaken should be done in cooperation with residents in order to fully ensure success.

Public Waterfronts

Public waterfronts are essentially public space and act in the same

with, but with the difference being their location on the waterfront. Urban waterfronts of some form can be found in most cities, as cities were generally built adjacent to water to stimulate trade. Despite the lessened need for trade via waterways, urban waterfronts continue to play a vital role in the city. The reclamation of waterfronts for public use has been a recent trend within cities. Indeed, "the urban waterfront is often one of the few places in a city where you can take a long, uninterrupted walk (Gordon, 1996). Whether for the creation of a linear park or a public beach, cities are recognizing the great benefit public waterfront can be.

Benefits of Public Waterfronts

Many of the benefits of public open space are similar to the benefits of public waterfronts: increased property value, improved health, improved public realm, etc. While the general benefits are the same, there are some differences in the specifics. The following section reviews the literature regarding the benefits of public waterfronts.

If a public park can increase the value of adjacent properties, then it is likely that public waterfronts can have the same impact. In fact, public waterfronts actually have a larger area of effect when it comes to an increase in property values. While the upper limit for parks in general is around 3000 feet from the park, it was found that 4000 feet is generally the upper limit for public waterfronts (Brown & Pollakowski, 1977). Also similar to parks: the increases in property value related to public waterfronts declines, as one is located further from the waterfront (Brown & Pollakowski, 1977).

Of course, the aesthetics and views that waterfront naturally provide is one of the major benefits to a public waterfront, as these features are a waterfronts major draws. Water provides a unique experience, whether it is the calm from the rolling waves of an expanding ocean or the bustle of a working harbour with floatplanes and tugboats seemingly working in unison. But it is not simply the sights that can be exploited. Waterfronts also provide unique soundscapes and smellscapes (Stefanovic, 2002). Wildlife, boats, planes, and waves are just some examples of the sounds one can hear along a waterfront; the fresh salt air providing a smell unique to oceans. On the negative side, hot and sunny days can provide particularly potent smells of algae and sea lettuce baking on the beach; but it is unique nonetheless.

It is in exploiting these natural features that provide immediate benefits for public waterfronts. As was discussed earlier, health benefits can include decreased anxiety, stress, and sadness, with an increase in physical activity, such as running, walking, and cycling. In addition, public waterfronts can provide access for recreational boating, kayaking, and canoeing. These activities also lead the way for business opportunities with a major focus on tourism. In a resource for planners, the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs (1987) noted, "a waterfront that has uses which are patronized by local residents is also likely to attract tourists" (p.3). Some of the factors in attracting tourists are: "size of waterfront, type of waterbody, and the market and regional factors" (Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1987, p.4). Attracting tourists to an area not only increases the monetary benefits for the local economy, but also has the added benefit of making an area safer through an increase in eyes on the street. However, it should be noted that an increase in usage and in neighbourhood density should be completed in conjunction with an increase in municipal services, such as public bathrooms and water fountains.

In terms of the environment, waterfronts provide a crucial link between the land and water, which produce ecologically valuable environments such as tidal flats (Bulleri & Chapman, 2010). It is in

this ecological value that public waterfronts can be both beneficial and harmful. Increased usage of waterfronts, along with altering the landscape to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, can drastically affect the landscape's efficiency. Litter from pedestrians, and pollution from boaters can have negative environmental effects. At the same time, public waterfronts can also aid in protecting these delicate landscapes, by providing educational awareness and creating appreciation. A public waterfront would also prevent private real estate directly abutting the shoreline, much of which would build as close as possible to the water's edge in order to fully exploit the magnificent views. Indeed, the creation of a public waterfront greenway may have positive effects on the shoreline and general ecosystem through conservation and protection (Fabos, 1995). While the shoreline along the Westsong Walkway is incredibly important, and has significant ecological value, it is just out of the scope of this project and thus will not be a main component. Any modifications or extensions to the walkway should be completed through ecological engineering, which "is the attempt to combine engineering principles with ecological processes to reduce environmental impacts from built infrastructure (Chapman & Underwood, 2011, p.304).

Public Waterfront Revitalization

The question remains: How does one revitalize an underutilized waterfront? This section will provide information from the literature revolving around successful strategies to waterfront revitalization. Afterwards, the precedent of Battery Park City in New York City will be drawn upon to demonstrate both the failure and success of revitalizing public waterfront.

A major asset to waterfronts is the views they provide. However, public waterfronts often do not do justice to the unfolding succession of views. Hellmund & Smith (2006) recommend view framing through the creation of vantage points and through experiences as one moves through the space. Additional simple design solutions, such as the provision of spaces for lingering and resting can go a long way in improving viewpoints (Stefanovic, 2002).

Similar to other public spaces, providing access to waterfronts is critical in increasing usage. As discussed earlier, access can refer to both getting to the space and moving within the space. Being able to easily navigate a space is fundamental in its success. However, simply placing directional signage is "aesthetically displeasing and depletes the experience" (Stefanovic, 2002, p.315). In this sense, it is important to remember Kevin Lynch's (1960) five elements of mental maps: paths, nodes, districts, landmarks, and edges. The creation of landmarks, or the promotion of existing ones, is just one way to aid in orientation. Rather than using ordinary maps with city streets, landmarks, nodes, points of interest, and districts should be used to make navigating a space easier. Stevens (2006), notes that Lynch's work does not go far enough and tends to ignore objects of play. He recommends the implementation of props, which can range from benches to monuments, in an effort to promote urban play. In comparing props to landmarks Stevens (2006) notes, "Props provide affordance for and inspire distinctive forms of movement, whereas landmarks merely orient movement" (p.812). Props give users the opportunity to actually experience and interact with the landscape, and are crucial in the formation of urban behaviour. However, Stevens creates a false dichotomy of sorts, ignoring the fact that landmarks can behave as props and vice versa.

However, one of the critical thought processes often left out of accessing public space, and one of the most recommended by users, is accessing the space throughout the various seasons and weather conditions (Stefanovic, 2002). It is simple to plan for a summer

public space, imagining a waterfront park or square that is filled with people enjoying the sun, and it is all too often easy to forget about what happens when it rains or snows. On the West Coast of Canada, people are used to the rain, and are more than willing to venture out if facilities are provided. This could be as simple as creating more sheltered spaces so people can duck into when they have had enough of the rain. This is especially important along ocean waterfronts, where people have an affinity for "storm watching", or venturing out just to see large waves crashing, to watch birds battling the wind, and to remember how quickly calm can turn to chaos. The provision of facilities such as shelter and safety in these conditions provides a diversity of uses and is critical to multi-season use of public waterfronts. Overall, a diversity of uses is important in increasing usage of a public waterfront. This is not only in terms of seasonality and events and marketing (as was mentioned in public space revitalization), but also in terms of land use. Being able to walk through an urban area, a natural setting, and an industrial area is a unique experience that oceanfronts and linear parks can provide (Stefanovic, 2002). Additionally, interaction with the water, where possible, can ensure a rich experience. This can be accomplished through water access points, bridges, piers, or spits (Stefanovic, 2002). This allows people to fully experience the natural setting, and to appreciate the wildlife such as fish, birds, and mammals.

The surrounding neighbourhoods can have a major effect on the status of a waterfront. Decaying or dangerous neighbourhoods will transfer the same perception to the waterfront. The same could be said about stagnant neighbourhoods. Some strategies in this regard are leveraging real estate to improve both the neighbourhood and the waterfront, while ensuring "private developments do not block visual and physical access to the [waterfront]" (Stefanovic, 2002, p.315). For such massive undertakings, it may be useful to pull the process out of the political scene, and this can be done using a public authority. If a public authority is out of the question, partnerships are essential to successful revitalization. All of this will be discussed in the following sections on precedents.

Battery Park City, New York City

Battery Park City is located next to the financial district and the Hudson River on the southwest tip of Manhattan in New York City. It is a 92-acre planned development, with an expected 14,000 residents when fully built out (Hughes, 2007). Currently, there are 36 acres worth of parks and open space within Battery Park City, which aligns with the Battery Park City Master Plan requirement of 30% open space (BPC, 2013). In terms of waterfront revitalization, Battery Park City is a success. But it had a tumultuous history. In the 1960s, the site was decaying, and to revitalize the area the Battery Park City Authority was formed. After much conflict between the city and the state, a master plan was developed in 1969 (Gordon, 1993). This plan called for a megastructure that was a single building complex tied together by a central pedestrian spine: an enclosed seven-storey structure that would run for one mile along the entire length of the project (Gordon, 1993). Luckily, the 1970s brought about a financial crisis and the project was stalled. To avoid defaulting on the project, a new master plan was formed in 1979, which called for a commercial center as the central aspect with a large focus on the quality of public spaces (Gordon, 1993). This flexible long-range master plan was one of the key factors in Battery Park City's success, allowing phasing to offer a variety of aesthetics that both differ and contribute to each other (Love, 2009). Phasing in conjunction with leveraging real estate is just one method of stimulating investment into a project, specifically with reference to public spaces. For instance, Battery Park City was able to convince developers to build pedestrian bridges to link Battery Park City to the World Trade Centre (Gordon, 1996).

Battery Park City also drew on the existing built environment. For instance, the Authority "adjusted its land use plan…by moving the proposed office node from the southern tip of the site to the centre, opposite the World Trade Centre" (Gordon, 1996, p.273). This aided in the creation of an agglomeration of offices, all of which could then take advantage of the existing transit facilities.

One of the major challenges for the success of Battery Park City was changing the site's image to the public from that of a landfill to that of an upscale neighbourhood. To do this, marketing was used in a unique method: marketing through design (Gordon, 1996). By creating high quality public spaces with easy access, the site's image was vastly improved. What is interesting is that public spaces can have such an effective role in swaying public opinion.

The open spaces in Battery Park City are well used – from walkers, joggers, and cyclists on the esplanade, to events in the parks. The parks feature a variety of interactive areas, such as pool tables and koi ponds (Hughes, 2007). Additionally, the Battery Park City Parks Conservancy sponsors a number of events such as dancing, fishing, sports, and tours (Hughes, 2007; BPC, 2013). The negative side to Battery Park City's parks and open spaces are in their original method of design. Battery Park City has a very clear separation of public and private, whereas "the best models of urbanism grow from the messy overlap of private interests and public space, as Jane Jacobs and countless other social theorists have pointed out" (Love, 2009, p.218). However, the pre-planning of open spaces allowed for a collaborative design approach in which architects worked with artists to incorporate public art directly into the open spaces (Gordon, 1996).
This comprehensively-planned 37 ha (92 acre) area now primarily houses middle- to upper-income households (Hughes, 2007). However, the Battery Park City Authority, a public authority that manages the area, collects revenue from residents in lieu of taxes. Any excess revenue after expenses is used for low-income housing in other areas of the city, such as in the Bronx (Hughes, 2007). This is an interesting method of providing low-income housing. Officials recognize that waterfront real estate is extremely valuable, and instead of forcing these developments to incorporate low-income housing, Battery Park City is able to simply provide the funds. In theory this is a good idea. However, this creates a homogeneous neighbourhood in terms of income, which is not always beneficial. For instance, although the parks and esplanade are public, the sense one gets when walking in Battery Park City is that of an exclusive neighbourhood. Therefore, the public parks are not truly accessible for all. A mixing of incomes would make the neighbourhood much more inclusive, and would also provide for more vibrancy and vitality.

A number of lessons can be derived from the Battery Park City precedent. First, high quality public spaces can do much to change public opinion. This means designing spaces that are both beautiful and easily accessible. Accessibility should be both physical and social, as spaces that have an exclusive feeling are not accessible to the entire population. Without clever marketing and programming, these spaces may fall to underutilization. Additionally, existing facilities should be exploited. In the case of Battery Park City, the World Trade Centre was used to create an office agglomeration. At the same time, officials should leverage developers to contribute to the improvement of public spaces, as it is not only beneficial for the public but also for private wealth.

Battery Park City is a planned district that attempts to mimic a naturally developed district as prescribed by Jane Jacobs (Fainstein, 1991). Its public spaces are relatively successful, and many lessons

can be learned from its history. However, none of its successes would have been possible had it not been for the Battery Park City Authority. The benefit behind this is that it mostly eliminates politically driven decisions. It allowed for the Authority to have complete control and the complete ability to design and build an entire district. In other words, the Authority was able to get the job done. However, on the negative side, for the vast majority of the planning and construction, "Battery Park City has involved no public participation whatsoever" (Fainstein, 1991, pp.28-29). Ideally, a compromise would be used in which an authority of sorts takes control over the design and construction, while still being somewhat accountable to the public.

DIAGNOSTIC

Our consideration of the context and scan of the literature both inform a detailed diagnostic of the Westsong Walkway. The following section is laid out in terms of a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). Photographs taken along the walkway in 2013 are provided to document its current state.

Strengths

The biggest strength of the walkway is its wide variety of views. As one turns a corner on this winding pathway, a new view of the ocean, marinas, floatplanes, or wildlife often appears (Figures 12 & 13). These views also provide fine opportunities in the form of viewframing, which is to be discussed later.

The trend for the existing neighbourhoods around the walkway is that of an increase in population. Indeed, the two new projects along the walkway (the Bayview and Swallow's Landing), have been popular. This increased population will be looking to the walkway for recreation and activities. It also displays that other increases in density will be successful, as the surrounding neighbourhoods tend to be desirable.

A positive benefit of the walkway's 'sleepy' quality is that it provides a very serene landscape (Figure 14). The quiet and low activity allow for a complete escape from the city while still being accessible to the core urban area. However, this does not mean that a serene landscape cannot be achieved with an increase in activity. In fact, there are plenty of opportunities for both pockets of activity and pockets of quiet spaces.

Figure 12: A floatplane readies to take off across from Rainbow Park

Figure 13: A floatplane lands with the Olympic Mountains as a backdrop.

Figure 14: The charming yet 'sleepy' Westsong Walkway.

Figure 15: Residential uses front the walkway, which results in a lack of vibrancy.

Figure 16: A spot where the walkway becomes narrow; so much so that users have to pass in single file.

Figure 17: A lack of a destination at the Esquimalt terminus causes a lack of polarity.

Weaknesses

The biggest weakness of the walkway tends to be its usage. Despite its beautiful views it is a quiet walkway with no vibrancy (Figure 15). As has been shown, a lack of programming and activities can be attributed to its lack of vibrancy. The Westsong Walkway was meant to be a popular regional amenity, and currently that is not the case.

At various sections along the Westsong Walkway, the path gets extremely narrow (Figure 16). Indeed, this also infringes on the possibilities of a variety of activities, such as cycling the walkway as well as local road races. By limiting the amount of activities, the walkway's usage is not up to par with its potential.

Finally, a lack of polarity fails to pull people along the walkway. This lack of polarity occurs not only at either end of the walkway, but also along the walkway (Figure 17 & 18). For instance, Esquimalt's terminus of the walkway simply leads onto a residential street. While there is a map of Esquimalt at the terminus, it is not enticing enough to further pull people into the municipality (Figure 19). A destination needs to be created in West Bay in order for visitors to remain in Esquimalt and benefit the municipality.

Opportunities

While the Westsong Walkway's views are its biggest strength, the potential for improving the views exists and thus provides an opportunity. As will be mentioned in the strategic design, viewframing is a critical component to any linear park, and it is something the Westsong Walkway needs to capitalize on (Figure 20 & 21). Similarly, its primary view of the ocean is also an opportunity in the sense of access points to the intertidal zone, some of which already exist (Figure 22). Improving these access points provides for educational benefits through interpretive signage, as well as adding unique activities along the walkway.

The proposed sewage treatment plant at McLoughlin Point provides for a prime opportunity for extending the walkway. The residents that previously blocked the extension may be more in favour of a walkway than a sewage plant, and may not try and block it again. Alternatively, if the sewage plant is forced upon Esquimalt by the province, then Esquimalt can negotiate to include the extension as part of the sewage plant construction.

The $12,000 allocated by both Esquimalt and the Provincial Capital Commission in favour of a study on twinning the walkway displays a desire to allow cyclists on the walkway. Widening the walkway provides a huge opportunity in immediately increasing the usage and thus the vibrancy.

Esquimalt's desired marine village in West Bay presents an opportunity to benefit the polarity of the walkway. The creation of a destination in Esquimalt will aid in pulling people from Victoria, along the walkway, and into Esquimalt. Alternatively, the possible commercial development of the historic Roundhouses would pull people from Esquimalt into the Songhees neighbourhood

Figure 18: The Victoria terminus currently suffers the same lack of polarity as the Esquimalt terminus.

Figure 19: The map at the Esquimalt terminus.

Figure 20: A view of downtown Victoria with potential for viewframing.

Figure 21: Another potential view to frame, this one would be of the new Johnson Street Bridge.

Figure 22: An existing access point on the Westsong Walkway to the intertidal zone.

Figure 23: The historic Roundhouses; part of the Bayview development.

(Figure 23). The opportunities for polarity should be exploited in order to get people traversing the length of the walkway.

The various proposed projects present an opportunity to improve the walkway. As previously mentioned, the proposed sewage plant could aid in extending the walkway to Macaulay Point Park and Fleming Beach (Figure 24 & 25). Any new developments along the walkway would not only increase the density, and thus potential usage of the walkway, but negotiations between the municipalities and developers could also lead to physical improvements to the walkway such as public art installations.

Threats

There are two main threats to the walkway. The first is that of simply letting it remain a sleepy walkway. While this may not do irrevocable damage to the walkway, it prevents the walkway from living up to its full potential as a vital and vibrant public space that is a regional amenity.

The second threat is that of proposed developments, despite also possibly being an opportunity. For instance, if the sewage plant is not constructed properly, particularly bad odours could emit and discourage people from using the walkway (Figure 26). Additionally, if developments do not properly consult the public, public backlash could occur that stall any sort of forward progress.

This diagnostic of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats has hopefully set the stage for the necessity of implementing a strategic design plan for the Westsong Walkway. The following section outlines the various initiatives that would aid the walkway in becoming a vibrant and vital regional amenity for Victoria.

Figure 24: The current path at Macaulay Point that was meant to be connected with the Westsong Walkway.

Figure 25: The docks at Fleming Beach/Macaulay Point Park.

Figure 26: An existing storm drain located at the Esquimalt terminus.

STRATEGIC DESIGN

This section outlines strategic design initiatives that will aid in improving the Westsong Walkway and adjacent neighbourhoods. Figure 27 displays a concept map of the possible locations and connections of a number of the initiatives. The initiatives are ordered according to importance. For instance, rezoning and programming would have immediate benefits and positively affect the additional initiatives, such as programming creating an increased need for widening. For phasing and possible costs, please refer to the Implementation section.

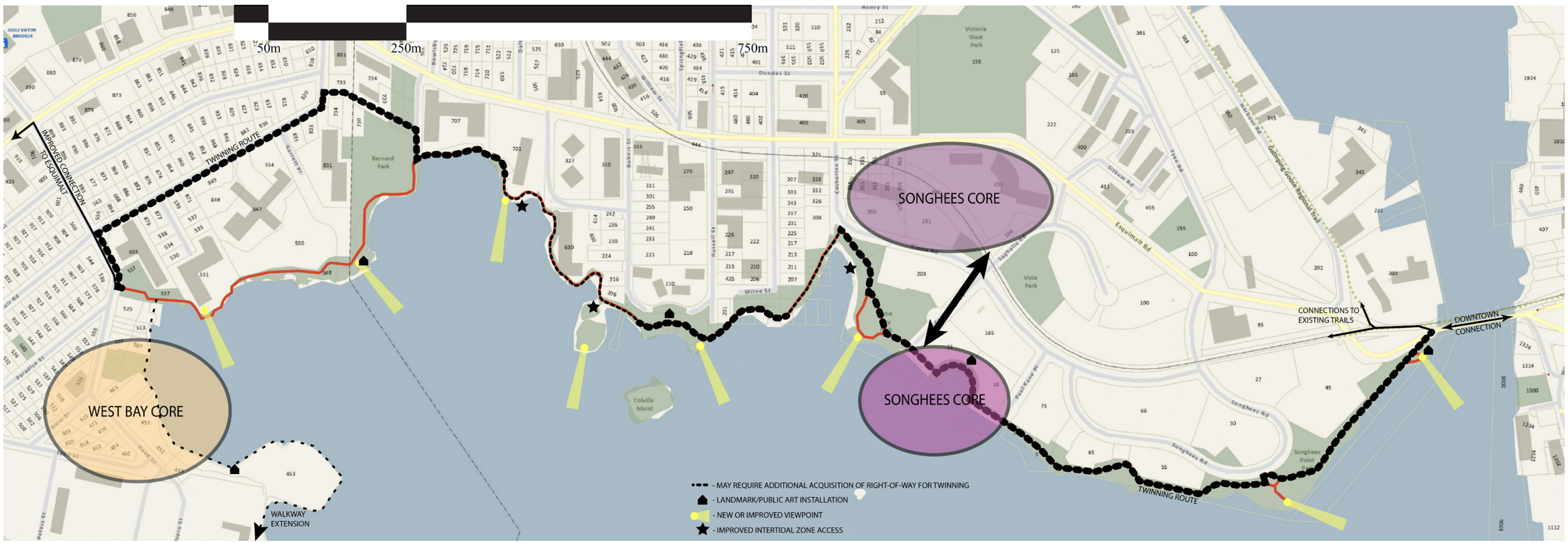

Figure 27: A concept plan for the strategic design improvements to the Westsong Walkway.

8.1 Zoning

The current failings of the Westsong Walkway can be at least partially attributed to the sterile nature of the surrounding neighbourhoods. The neighbourhoods' development was focused around residences and a lack of mixed-use, despite planning for a vibrant neighbourhood at both Songhees and West Bay. In order to encourage people to use the walkway fully, polarity needs to be achieved. Put simply, destinations need to be created that pull people from one end of the walkway to the other. In order to do this, Songhees and West Bay both need to be revitalized. The increasing populations in the area and the current desire for walkability in urban planning forums make this the ideal time to encourage mixed-used developments in the Songhees and West Bay neighbourhoods.

Past plans and current plans call for the West Bay neighbourhood to be transformed into a marine village. Similarly, this strategic design plan also calls for increased development in West Bay, in an effort to create a destination at the Esquimalt side of the walkway. The existing three marinas currently provide the necessary infrastructure for the beginnings of a marine village style neighbourhood. Surrounding the marinas, density should be increased in an effort to increase the population of the neighbourhood, and thus the ability to support businesses. This increase in density should compliment the neighbourhood, rather than overwhelming the existing built environment, which is why it is crucial for Esquimalt to adopt design guidelines for the West Bay neighbourhood. The existing marinas should be exploited in creating a marine village, as they provide the existing infrastructure and base for a marine village to be formed around. A marine village could be inspired by the success of Victoria's Fisherman's Wharf. However, simply replicating Fisherman's Wharf will not work, because West Bay needs something that will set it apart and create an attraction for locals and tourists alike. Instead, a marine village in West Bay should be complimentary to the existing Fisherman's Wharf, as the two are just a short harbour ferry ride away from each other.

FISHERMAN'S WHARF

Fisherman's Wharf in Victoria is located in James Bay and directly across the harbour from the Westsong Walkway. This marine destination features floathomes, fishing vessels, and tourist attractions such as whale watching and fish n' chip shops. On a summer day Fisherman's Wharf is a bustling place with tourists and locals alike. Its success has also spurred the development of the high-end apartments that surround the wharf. A similar concept should be created in West Bay, but should not be directly mimicked as Fisherman's Wharf already has a tight hold on the market and competition would not be beneficial for either destination.

The Songhees area was originally intended to be a neighbourhood village with a mix of uses (City of Victoria, 1986). However, its design guidelines were not fully adhered to, and now Songhees is a relatively sterile neighbourhood with a major focus towards residential uses. Spinnakers Brewpub, a successful local restaurant and brewery, is the only real commercial activity in the neighbourhood. However, with the International Marina and the Roundhouse Development, Songhees still has a chance to evolve into a neighbourhood or urban village. This strategic design plan therefore recommends long-term zoning to create a neighbourhood core within Songhees, with the main anchors being the Roundhouses, International Marina, and Spinnakers Brewpub. Additionally, this plan recommends rezoning the light industrial area on the edge of Songhees into mixed-use, in an effort to strengthen the neighbourhood core.

As a method of cost-savings for Esquimalt and Victoria, any new developments along the walkway should be required to improve the existing walkway in some form as part of a Community Benefit Agreement with the City or Township. For instance, developers may be required to install a piece of art into the walkway or to repair an existing section of the walkway. This method will reduce maintenance and installation costs, while benefitting the walkway and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Finally, in an effort to improve vitality and vibrancy, zoning should be adapted to accommodate mixed-uses in the areas along the walkway. As previously discussed, the current zoning surrounding the walkway is primarily residential. In order to properly plan for the future, these areas should be preemptively rezoned towards mixed-use and medium to high density. Furthermore, an effort should be made to attract family-oriented units, due to the current lack of youth surrounding the area. It may be necessary to offer incentives to developers to create mixed-use developments and family-oriented units. A study that looks into current best practices should be undertaken in order to develop a strategy for the Westsong Walkway.

Proper rezoning along with programming could aid the Westsong Walkway and surrounding neighbourhoods into becoming a vibrant and vital area in the near and long-term future.

8.2 Programming

To increase usage of the walkway, it needs to become a local destination. Creating polarity with urban villages at each end would strengthen its identity, but proper programming that attracts a wide variety of users needs to be done in tandem with the creation of urban villages.

Existing programming in the Parks and Recreation departments of both Victoria and Esquimalt could be adapted to benefit the Westsong Walkway. For instance, photography classes would greatly benefit from a nature session along the walkway, where participants can photograph a wide variety of wildlife alongside marine activities and existing kayaking classes could be expanded for trips alongside the walkway. Additionally, Lime Bay Park, with its large, well-manicured lawn, could be used for meditative activities, such as Tai Chi or yoga. Finally, running clinics could use the walkway as a training course of sorts, with its small hills, winding path, and scenic views.

During the winter, Barnard Park is vastly underutilized, mostly because the tennis courts and playground are not ideal for cool temperatures. However, it is possible to invigorate this park. One method is the installation of an active park, which is the installation of durable outdoor gym equipment. Currently, Esquimalt already has an active park, but it is further away behind its Town Hall. As was seen in the observations, the walkway is used by number of seniors. The installation of an active park would not only increase usage of Barnard Park, but would also both increase the health of the seniors that already use the walkway and attract even more seniors to use the walkway.

The other method of invigoration is to give the tennis courts another use during the fall and winter months. Hockey cage soccer, and cycle polo nets could be installed on a semi-permanent basis (i.e. during certain seasons) in the tennis courts, which could attract recreational games of floor hockey, soccer, or even bicycle polo. These sports would attract a younger population to the area, which is currently lacking. City-sponsored tournaments, like the existing road hockey tournament, could increase the awareness of the park and thus by association the walkway.

As seen from the personal observations in the context section, the Westsong Walkway is currently well used by runners and joggers. However, the walkway is currently too short and too narrow to accommodate any local road races. If the twinning were to occur, a 5km race would be possible using just the walkway alone, and a longer 10km race would be possible if both the twinning and the extension occurred. The desire exists, as Esquimalt currently offers a 5km race that traverses through Saxe Point and Macaulay Point parks.

TENNIS COURT REUSE

Cycle polo is an emerging sport on North America's West Coast, in which players engage in traditional polo, only using bicycles in lieu of horses. In East Vancouver's Grandview Park, the City of Vancouver renewed underutilized tennis courts in favour of the world's first single-purpose cycle polo court (previously, players would take over existing courts from other sports). The City of Victoria should use Vancouver's cycle polo successes when reinventing Barnard Park.

8.3 Physical Transformations

Extension

In 2001, the proposal for extending the Westsong Walkway farther into Esquimalt by connecting it to Macaulay Point Park came crashing to a halt just as construction was about to begin. Since that time, McLoughlin Point has become the most likely site for Victoria's sewage treatment plant (Figure 28). Recently, a design for the plant was sent back to the drawing board due to being considered an eyesore (Shaw, 2013). While the Township of Esquimalt is adamantly and officially against a sewage treatment plant on this prime waterfront property due to the possibility of a future neighbourhood in its place, the provincial government may forcefully implement it. Therefore, the Westsong Walkway extension is timelier than ever, and twelve years later this proposal should be revisited.

The proposed extension (Figure 10), as was previously mentioned, was halted due to military families not wanting a walkway in their backyard. However, it is unlikely that they would prefer a sewage plant to a walkway. Therefore, Esquimalt should move quickly in order to begin construction on the walkway, as a way of both strengthening the Westsong Walkway, but also as a way of halting the sewage plant.

The existing plans and studies for the extension should be utilized. Phase 1 of the existing plan was already completed, with a path now extending from Macaulay Point Park to Anson Crescent. Therefore, only Phases 2 and 3 need to be approved and completed. Phase 2 would be the most difficult, as this is where the majority of the military families are located and where the proposed sewage plant would be located. Phase 3 includes the various marinas, all of which at one point wanted a public walkway. Therefore, Phase 2 should be negotiated and initiated immediately. Phase 3 would be completed concurrently with the transformation of West Bay into a marine village, as the Halifax-style boardwalk would be a main attraction to the marine village. Finally, this extension should be wide enough to allow both pedestrians and cyclists to access and use the walkway safely.

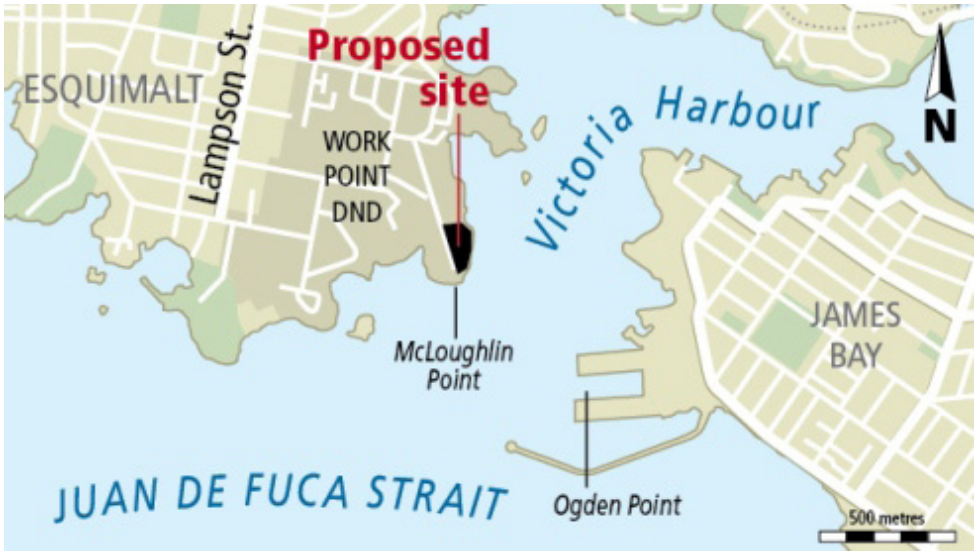

Figure 28: The proposed location for Victoria's sewage treatment plant.

Twinning

Twinning the walkway, while the most expensive upfront cost of the initiatives, is the most likely to increase usage and thus vitality. This would involve widening the walkway to a minimum width of 5.5m and up to 10m in high-traffic areas, such as gathering and focal points. In doing so, multiple non-motorized modes of transportation could utilize the walkway, with a separation of paths for both pedestrians and cyclists (and other wheeled transportation). Cyclists would be able to use the walkway both as a scenic ride and as an alternative transportation route to riding on the road alongside cars.

Funds should be collected from Victoria, Esquimalt, and the Provincial Capital Commission (as well as any other potential sources of funding) to undertake a study on the possibility of twinning the walkway. There may be more impetus for this study at present, as Victoria is aiming to create a bicyclist friendly, uninterrupted pathway for its Harbour Pathway, of which the Westsong Walkway may be able to compliment.

As some sections of the walkway are too windy and other areas traverse through ecologically valuable environments (such as the Garry Oak Meadows), some areas will not be able to be twinned. These areas will most likely occur in Esquimalt's section. Therefore, where twinning is impossible the bicycle path should be rerouted through side streets until it is able to meet up again with the Westsong Walkway.

Twinning the walkway would also contribute to programming, as a wider walkway could accommodate a wider variety of events, such as local running races.

VANCOUVER SEAWALL

The Stanley Park Seawall in Vancouver, BC was originally created to prevent erosion, with the added benefit of being used as a linear park. However, there was an ongoing conflict between cyclists and pedestrians, due to the narrow path. Consequently, cycling was outlawed on the seawall in 1974 (Griffin & Clark, 2005). After a donation from a private firm, Vancouver was able to widen the seawall to six metres, make cycling one-way, and thus reduce the conflicts. In addition, the seawall has been successfully extended along the shoreline to provide a pathway outside of Stanley Park. Nowadays, the seawall is well used by walkers, runners, rollerbladers, and cyclists alike, yet the conflicts still exist. In 2012, Vancouver created a new cycling plan for Stanley Park as a result of a continued increase in usage and again designed to reduce conflict. One of the suggestions in the plan is to widen the seawall and also make cycling two-way at parts, though these are a long-term suggestion that would require public input (Griffin, 2012). Victoria and Esquimalt should look to Vancouver's future progress and learn from the successes and failures of the seawall widening.

Access

Improving access to and within the walkway is a surefire way of increasing usage. In terms of improving access to the walkway, Esquimalt Road should be modified to prevent it from acting as a barrier for pedestrians and cyclists. In this sense, more crossings should be introduced and signage along the road should direct people towards the walkway. Similarly, directional signage should be erected along the side streets that connect to the walkway, as well as on Head Street in Esquimalt and at the Johnson Street Bridge. Finally, bicycle locks should be provided at key points on the walkway. This will allow cyclists to arrive at the walkway and walk, and could provide further demand for the twinning of the walkway.

Much of improving access within the walkway is related to wayfinding. However, another major improvement is to intertidal zone access. The intertidal zone access nearest to Barnard Park (Figure 29) is a prime example of how the other access stairs should be modeled. First, the stairs down are new and well maintained, making people both feel safe using them as well as want to use them. Additionally, the placement of educational signage near the access stairs creates a sense of curiosity, which draws people down to the intertidal zone to explore in an ecologically conscious manner (Figure 30). Where existing stairs occur, this design should be followed. Where stairs are non-existent, such as in Esquimalt, the sense that one is exploring an untouched area should be maintained. However, educational signage should be installed to ensure both ecologically conscious exploring and intellectual curiosity.

Figure 29: The intertidal zone access stairs nearest to Barnard Park.

Figure 30: The educational signage at the intertidal zone access point.

Lighting

The lighting of the sections within Victoria and Esquimalt are consistent, but inconsistent when compared to each other. Victoria's lighting seems to be primarily aesthetic. It matches the lighting in its downtown core: three big bulbs facing upwards. While this works downtown because there are many other lights from stores and apartments, it is not very functional on the walkway. The efficiency of the light is lessened due to much of it escaping upwards rather than where it is needed, towards the ground. On the other hand, Esquimalt's lighting is much more functional and appears to be newer. These lights also have shades that lessen the escaping light and focus it onto the path, providing for a more lit area.

While it is understandable that Victoria would want to have lighting that is consistent with its downtown, the Westsong Walkway is not located downtown. The Johnson Street Bridge acts as a physical and mental barrier that separates the downtown from the walkway, and therefore there is no need to have consistent lighting, as most people probably would not be able to tell the difference. However, the Westsong Walkway is a linear park with no definitive barriers, so a difference in lighting is more noticeable. Therefore, it is recommended that Victoria replace its lighting on the Westsong Walkway to be similar, if not the same as, the lighting in Esquimalt. This will aid in creating a more well lit space that can be used in the evening, as well as improving consistency along the walkway.

Public Art

Placing various pieces of public art along the walkway could be used as a method of encouraging play, and improving wayfinding through the creation of landmarks (Lynch, 1961; Stevens, 2006). Art along the walkway should be similar to those found in Battery Park City: incorporated into the existing infrastructure. The beauty of the walkway currently is its ability to be one with the natural landscape, and existing art that is not part of the infrastructure seems out of place. New art could be designed in a way to give better views, such as framing views or improving viewpoints. New art along the walkway should be incorporated into any new developments, as a Community Benefit Agreement of sorts.

BATTERY PARK CITY

Battery Park City in New York utilized an interesting method of improving viewpoints: its public art is designed literally into the landscape. As one walks, a piece of art seems to appear out of the walkway. For instance, various spots frame views, such as the Statue of Liberty, using pedestrian vantage points (Figure 31). Additionally, their viewpoints are also pieces of art in themselves (Figure 32). A strategy such as the one used in Battery Park City could be very successful along the Westsong Walkway.

Figures 31 & 32: Viewframing using public art in Battery Park City.

Wayfinding

Perhaps the easiest design strategy to implement is consistency in the walkway's name. One consistent name will make the walkway more recognizable, which will aid in word-of-mouth attention, media, and the general dissemination of information. Some examples of greenways and walkways in Victoria that have consistent names, and are more recognizable, are Dallas Road, Ogden Point, and the Galloping Goose. Therefore, name recognition is an easy way to increase usage of the walkway. In an effort to acknowledge future multi-modal use of the walkway, the sole name should remove its pedestrian element and use the official name put forth by the Provincial Capital Commission: "Westsong Way". This name should be consistent in Victoria and Esquimalt, and be adopted by any future extension in Esquimalt.

The current signage along the walkway is inadequate. The current wayfinding signage (Figure 33) uses streets and metric distances to orientate users. However, most people do not orientate themselves via street names, but rather through landmarks. Additionally, the signs interpretation of distance by metres from the Johnson Street Bridge is not very useful, especially for someone in the middle of the walkway. Each sign should therefore be designed for its specific location, and distance by time should be used instead of distance by metres. For instance, the signage for someone at the middle of the walkway would denote that it is a 15-minute walk to the Johnson Street Bridge or West Bay Marine Village. At the moment, there are very few educational signs. The Westsong Walkway traverses through unique habitats as well as areas with fascinating history. Therefore, the walkway should provide educational signage in order to tell a story of sorts, and perhaps attract more families to the area.

Another strategy is to differentiate destinations through ground materials. Currently, the walkway is fairly successful in using a variety of materials for the path. For instance, while most of the terminus) and brick (where the future marina is to be located). Any new sections, or sections that are being improved, should take into account the ground material in an effort to continually improve wayfinding. Additionally, if the walkway is to be twinned, then different paving materials should be used to differentiate between the pedestrian-only sides of the path with the cyclist sides of the path.

RALEIGH

On January 18, 2012, numerous wayfinding signs appeared overnight in Raleigh, North Carolina (Tomasulo, 2013). The signs featured arrows pointing to local landmarks and the times it would take to get to the landmarks by walking. This pop-up urbanism project, termed Walk Raleigh, was an instant success, getting attention from Atlantic Cities and the BBC. While the City originally deemed the signs illegal, the signs were eventually permitted as a pilot project. By December, the campaign was officially adopted into the Raleigh Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan (Tomasulo, 2013). Initiatives such as Walk Raleigh display the desire and necessity to make wayfinding accessible and easy to use. Similar to Raleigh, landmarks and times should be used on the Westsong Walkway to guide wayfinding, rather than the existing signage that uses streets and distances in metres.

Figure 33: Current signage along the Westsong Walkway.

8.4 Ownership

The issue of who should pay for maintenance and upgrade costs of the walkway has history, with both Esquimalt and Victoria suggesting the Capital Regional District take over the linear park. In order to guarantee the area's future success, it either needs to be turned over to a non-political entity or a board needs to be formed to ensure cross-municipality cooperation.

One solution that was put forth before was to hand the linear park over to the CRD. This would force the CRD to use its money on the walkway that it collects from municipalities for its park fund. The CRD, though, generally does not plan for the surrounding neighbourhoods around its park. Yet in principle, this change in ownership could work. The municipalities' money that was freed up from maintenance and upgrade costs could be directly funneled into planning for the surrounding neighbourhoods. Indeed, more attention could be directed to these neighbourhoods. However, in practice the money the now extra money and time would not be solely directed to the walkway neighbourhoods, and instead would be reinvested into more pressing priorities according to whoever is currently in power. Therefore, it would be better for the neighbourhoods if a long-term solution involving both municipalities could be arranged.

The Greater Victoria Harbour Authority is in charge of Victoria's harbour, but not its public waterfront, other than Victoria's breakwater at Ogden Point. While this authority currently focuses on marine activity, it may be worthwhile to examine if it could expand its authority to Victoria's public waterfront. However, it is unlikely the municipalities would want to give up the surrounding neighbourhood land to an authority's control, as it means a significant reduction in property taxes. Therefore, the ideal solution would involve both municipalities putting politics aside and working in cooperation.

While both municipalities should retain ownership, a body that oversees the walkway should be implemented. This body would be made up of elected representatives and an urban planner from both municipalities. Its primary purpose would be to ensure the walkway is consistent and coherent throughout the entire length. The secondary purpose would be to obtain funds from the municipalities and external sources for maintenance and upgrades, as well as negotiate with developers to discover ways in which new developments could benefit the walkway and surrounding neighbourhoods.

IMPLEMENTATION

In order to spread out costs and ensure the walkway and surrounding neighbourhoods are improved in the best manner possible, I have included a possible implementation timeline. Table 5 displays the various strategies and their subsequent items, as well as their phasing over 10 years and capital costs. Costs are split into four categories: Low (under $10,000), Medium ($10,000-$25,000), High (over $25,000), and Staff Time.

Phase 1 encompasses the first years. These are the most pressing initiatives and some of the easiest to implement. For instance, changing the name would require a council vote and then updating documents and existing signage. Rezoning is an ongoing initiative, but should be initiated in the first phase to ensure design guidelines are created and met by new developments. The extension should be undertaken immediately if it is to beat out the proposal for a sewage plant on McLoughlin Point. Phase 2 revolves around the twinning initiative and other initiatives that can be completed at the same time. The twinning will take a relatively long period of time, due to the need for a study to be undertaken as well as the necessity of constructing in an ecologically sensitive manner. While the twinning is occurring, various other initiatives should be implemented such as lighting, ground materials, and access in order to minimize construction costs. Finally, ongoing initiatives are listed in Phase 3. These can be undertaken at any time, mostly dependent on demand. For instance, Community Benefit Agreements and Public Art are both dependent on new developments. Public art may require some capital costs in the case of a cost-sharing agreement between a developer and the municipality. While programming may have some initial upfront capital costs, in the long run events and programs may actually produce revenue for the municipalities.

Table 5: Proposed implementation of the strategic design initiatives.

Strategy	Initiatives	Phase	Years	Capital Cost
Physical	Walkway Name	1	0-1	Low
Ownership	-	1	0-1	Staff Time
Zoning	Rezoning	1	0-1	Staff Time
Physical	Extension	1	0-2	High
Physical	Signage	1	1-2	Medium
Physical	Twinning	2	2-10	High
Physical	Lighting	2	3-5	Medium
Physical	Access	2	4-7	Medium
Physical	Ground Materials	2	7-10	Low
Programming	New Events	3	Ongoing	Low
Programming	Existing Programs	3	Ongoing	Low
Zoning	Community Benefit Agreements	3	Ongoing	Staff time
Physical	Public Art	3	Ongoing	Low

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore the specific question: What can be done with the existing Westsong Walkway to strengthen its role in the landscape of Greater Victoria and to enhance its vitality and vibrancy as a significant public space? The strategic design recommendations presented in the previous chapter can guide intervention to transform the Westsong Walkway into a vibrant greenway.

The Westsong Walkway in Victoria, BC is a linear park with vast potential. Its prime waterfront location on Victoria's Inner Harbour—a tourist destination in itself—gives it magnificent views and a large latent base of users. Additionally, the walkway is located along an ecologically valuable landscape, with a wide variety of flora such as Garry Oak Meadows, and fauna, such as otters, herons, pelicans, and ducks. Despite these physical advantages, the walkway is not living up to its potential as a local destination. Some of the major reasons include a lack of polarity pulling people from one end of the walkway to the other, a singular-use built form, and a pedestrian-only pathway.

The single-use residential neighbourhoods surrounding the walkway have also contributed to a relatively sterile environment. Residents must leave their neighbourhoods for goods, services, and activities. Additionally, while residents immediately adjacent know the park, it is relatively unknown to Greater Victoria residents. Adjacent residents tend to think of the park as a secret gem within Victoria. Popularizing the walkway may upset a number of the adjacent residents, who like the walkway as being their secret. However, public spaces and public parks are just that, meant for the entirety of the public. Therefore, a strategy is necessary to not only improve on the existing neighbourhoods, but also to improve usage of the Westsong Walkway and make it into a local destination.

The three major strategies for improving the walkway and adjacent neighbourhoods that were previously outlined in this strategic design plan relate to physical design, zoning changes, and programming. Physical strategies ranged from low cost (name change, and public art) to high cost (twinning and extending). Zoning strategies revolved around creating urban villages in both West Bay and Songhees. Programming focused on encouraging activities and events along and around the walkway in an effort to improve usage. In addition, oversight of the walkway was discussed, with the ideal solution being a cross-municipality board that oversees the planning for the walkway and adjacent neighbourhoods.

While all strategies have important roles to play, some are more necessary than others. For instance, rezoning and programming are two simple initiatives that would have immediate benefits for the walkway and neighbourhoods, as the planning for urban villages in Songhees and West Bay will not only improve the walkway's polarity, but also strengthen the neighbourhoods as a whole. Twinning the walkway will have immediate positive benefits in increasing bicycle traffic on the walkway. Finally, extending the walkway could improve the West Bay urban village as well as encourage the reevaluation of sewage treatment on prime waterfront land.

The implementation of this strategic design plan will have positive social and economic effects for the Westsong Walkway and surrounding area. The relatively minimal costs and short time period of implementation will display immediate benefits for both Victoria and Esquimalt.

A number of future studies should be undertaken to ensure the success of the Westsong Walkway as a vibrant and vital greenway. This study was only able to systematically study use of the walkway over a short period of time. Therefore, it is recommended that a longitudinal study of use be conducted, which would identify both current use patterns

but also act as a tool for evaluation of any initiatives undertaken. Feasibility studies for the more costly initiatives should be conducted. For instance, the twinning study that was initially proposed by the Provincial Capital Commission should occur, as it would identify the ideal route while still protecting the ecological habitat along the walkway, as well as identify the various costs associated with widening the walkway. Finally, for the urban villages, intensive market studies and incentive studies should be undertaken in an effort to fully understand the needs of the area and to prevent failed developments.

Sterile neighbourhoods and public spaces can be found in every city. From this project, it is clear that revitalizing these sterile parks in vital and vibrant public spaces can have a positive benefit on the surrounding neighbourhoods. Perhaps more importantly, through environmental, social, and economic benefits, the revitalized parks can have immediate positive effects on the residents of a city. From the strategic design of this project, it is also clear that it is not difficult to revitalize a public space. Programming is a simple measure that can have immediate benefits in terms of public space usage, while rezoning would be an easy way to benefit the neighbourhoods in the long term. However, competing priorities often push revitalization of parks off the radars of cities, despite the relatively high benefits and relatively low costs. The main takeaway from this study of the Westsong Walkway is that urban planners should look to underutilized parks in an effort to improve the overall quality of the built environment and the overall quality of life for residents.

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