

RE:Connection

DESIGN DESCRIPTION

natural environment to the north
 commerce to the west | connection and the future in the centre | industry to the east
 history to the south

He jogs toward the beacon – an undulating ribbon of images – pauses to smell the salt in the air and cedars nearby.

CRAB Park meant so much more to her since then. It's not so lonely now.

They catch a glimpse of a gathering crowd... on the other side of the city.

Amongst its great feats of urbanism, Vancouver finds itself socially segmented whether by class or convenience. RE:Connection harnesses future technology and new community space to bring people together in action and celebration. It stitches the heart of Gastown to a seawall extension to CRAB Park (Portside Park) and south across the neighbourhood to False Creek. Racing across the rail yards and Waterfront Road it plunges into Burrard Inlet to connect the vital urban story of Vancouver to the land and sea that sustains it.

RE:Connection features a beacon illuminating virtual/visual connections across the city. A mesh of video and light takes images from key public spaces all over the city, as well as individuals so thousands more can join those present at the bridge. This project endeavours to reconsider and reclaim the spectre of video surveillance by harnessing it for democratic action. It democratizes access to technology and collectivizes the public forum.

This bridge is about **reclaiming** infrastructure as place, **reminding** us of our privileges, **remembering** our history and **reconnecting** people throughout Vancouver.

LOCATION AND CONTEXT

RE:Connection is located North of Gastown. Starting at the foot of Carrall Street along Water Street the bridge sweeps up over the rail yards and down into the waters of Burrard Inlet. It is slotted directly west of Portside Park and responds to the existing topography on the park site. The future site of the Whitecaps soccer stadium is anticipated further to the west with a vibrant new seawall path expected to join the spaces. The Carrall Street Greenway, over the bridge, achieves its planned recreational link between False Creek and the inlet as well as BC Place and the anticipated new home of the Vancouver Art Gallery two other major sources of crowd aggregation in the city. The bridge provides thoughtful visual connections to the Telus World of Science, Canada Place and the Port of Vancouver.

STATISTICS

Total project area: 8555 m²
 Covered and interior area: 3050m²
 Bridge clearance: 7.5m

DESIGN CRITERIA

Utility

Staging and access are primarily available from the north edge where the seawall interface connects to Waterfront Road and green regions of the bridge structure are conceived as structural surfaces. Weather protection is addressed with a bold canopy structure.

Accessibility

Care has been taken to address universal design throughout the bridge design. Surfaces have been articulated to provide paths at less than 10 per cent grade with landings, and an elevator as part of the

community centre and retail design. Seating is integrated along all edges as well as being sculpturally integrated into the ground materials of the bridge deck. Drawn details on the bridge deck are flush or high relief and high contrast. Materials raised from the surface are readily identifiable elements, which integrate light elements for greater contrast.

The Seabus terminal is in close proximity to the site along the seawall, accessibly linking users to Skytrain and the West Coast Express as well. The 50 False Creek bus serves Water Street at the foot of the bridge with 10 additional routes including 003, 004, 007, 008, 210, 211, 214, 290, 292, and N8 available one block south at Cordova.

The digital connectivity comprising this design also permits people of all mobilities and abilities to participate virtually through the interface of neighbourhood towers and public spaces or their own devices.

Bicycle-friendly elements have been considered in the design – from a Trampe foot lift, to secure bike storage in the community centre.

FEATURES AND PROGRAMMING

Large urban space	provides functional, casual space for 5000 users, even more in conjunction with associated park space.
Boost Portside Park usage	complements spaces and services of Portside Park
Virtual connections	network of towers links public sites across city. Users will have the opportunity to log on to virtually participate in public activities from any access point, computer, or dial in from video-enabled mobile devices including phones.
Virtual representation	the fabric of the tower undulates with images of users virtually participating – celebrating or demonstrating – at sites across the city. Towers also serve as public wireless access points.
Pedestrian density sensors	axes of LEDs built into the bridge illustrate the relative number of people near the linked towers across the city. 'Pedestrian density sensors' installed along with the small towers feed data to the bridge. As more people gather, more LEDs light up.
Public art	maritime art opportunities conceived for the dock.
Public dock	open public dock accessible for variety of small craft.
Landmark beacon	the tower provides a lighted landmark along the south shore.
Community centre	large, fresh multiuse space for Gastown and surrounding residents.
Kiosks and micro retail	open spaces adaptable for any range from open air eating to full service restaurant or community bazaars to long-term retail opportunities.
Performance	elevated area around tower provides 360-degrees of outdoor performance options. Attached multiuse facility provides high quality indoor space.
Multiuse facility	open community use, activities, art and performance or neighbourhood services as needed.
Complements future Stadium	fills and informs future interstitial space between the stadium and park.
Completes Seawall loop	The seawall is quintessentially Vancouver and a vital resource for recreation, reflection and reconnection simultaneously to the city, nature and world. This project ties together the final knot in the seawall's green ribbon encircling downtown Vancouver, driving the Carrall Street Greenway across to the waterfront.
Integrated into existing terrain	respects existing history and uses in CRAB Park, slotting neatly along side the existing park terrain.