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Showcase housing development starts in the heart of Vancouver

Planners and architects in Vancouver are transforming what was once considered an eyesore into one of the most imaginative housing developments in North America.

The Vancouver False Creek area, which is the section being developed, neatly separates the city's downtown core from the residential areas to the south. The 1.6-kilometre-long inlet was once an industrial and transportation area with the Canadian Pacific Railway's shunting yards on the north shore, a dilapidated industrial estate on the south shore and some polluted water in between. The water is already cleaner and most of the barges have given way to marinas and pleasure boats.

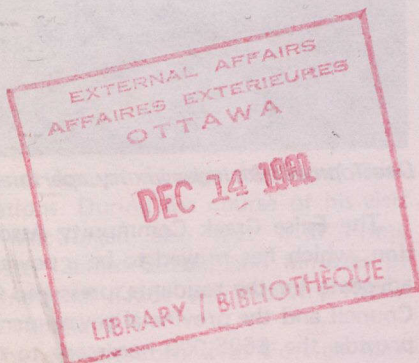
World-wide interest

In fact, the transformation along the south side has attracted the attention of planners and architects from around the world. By the time all the construction work is completed in 1982, an entirely new neighbourhood of 2,500 residential units will have been created in less than ten years. It also has a park, elementary

school, shops, restaurants, recreational facilities, community centre, and yachting marina.

With its waterfront setting, spectacular view of downtown Vancouver and the mountains behind, and its easy-to-reach location, the new False Creek community has already become a desirable place to live. This fact has not, however, consigned False Creek to upper-income households only. From the very earliest planning stages in 1972-73, the development was designed to have a mix of residents — families, singles, physically disabled, and elderly residents, of all income levels. Half the housing is sold or rented at market prices, half is subsidized through government assistance — resulting in a community with the same socio-economic balance as other socially mixed Vancouver neighbourhoods.

As well as ensuring a social mix, planners had other criteria to follow. The role of the car was to be de-emphasized; there would be no through streets but paths instead; there would be access for the general public to the park and sea-wall, and semi-private, enclosed spaces for



Condominium townhouses are part of new Vancouver housing development.



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