

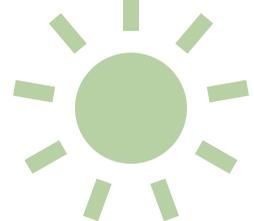
A Proactive Approach, from Parking to Plants

With the SEFC Green Building Strategy, the City of Vancouver took a proactive approach to environmental building design in SEFC, one that would affect the environmental performance of buildings citywide. Adopted as policy in 2004, the strategy establishes a minimum baseline of environmental performance for building design and construction. It applies to all new medium- and high-density residential, mixed-use, commercial, institutional and industrial buildings in SEFC.

The SEFC Green Building Strategy required that all buildings be designed to meet a minimum of LEED Silver certification. In addition, the City added mandatory baseline requirements to ensure that sustainable design was addressed comprehensively, across all aspects of building and site design. The following are recommendations from the SEFC Green Building Strategy in the areas of Energy, Parking, Landscape and Water, and Waste Management:

Energy

- Meet an overall energy performance baseline (equal to two LEED energy points)
- Specify energy-efficient appliances
- Use metering, smart controls and occupancy sensors
- Utilize the neighbourhood energy utility (district heating system)



Parking

- Provide preferred parking for co-op and car-share vehicles
- Relax minimum quota for parking stalls
- “Unbundle” parking from the sale of a residential unit (the purchaser has the option to opt in or out of ownership of a parking space)



Landscape and Water

- Specify low flow toilets, faucets and showerheads
- Use drought resistant and/or native plant species (goal of zero potable water use in irrigation)
- Install green roofs on 50 per cent of roof area
- Create space for urban agriculture in landscaped areas
- Implement on-site stormwater management practices



Waste Management

- Provide space for three streams of waste collection: garbage, recycling and organics
- Implement composting capacity in gardens and landscaped areas
- Divert 75 per cent of construction waste from landfill



Many Voices, One Plan

Community consultation and engagement is a key part of building sustainable communities. The vision of creating a model sustainable community in SEFC came from concerned citizens who wanted to see a vibrant, ecologically sound and socially cohesive community. Despite the shifts caused by successive Councils, the Olympic bid and various interests and pressures, this vision has held strong.

Many groups have been involved in the SEFC planning process, including the Southeast False Creek Working Group, Designers for Social Responsibility, and the Southeast False Creek Stewardship Group, a City advisory committee established in 1997. In addition, a comprehensive public consultation program included numerous open houses, public workshops and public hearings,

as well as input from adjacent business improvement associations and residential associations.

Members of these groups invested significant amounts of volunteer time visioning, researching and developing recommendations. Within the general goal of “building livable neighbourhoods,” citizens considered a wide variety of issues, including adequate housing, health care, education, employment, mobility, urban agriculture and environmental restoration. Since there is no single approach to sustainable community development, the rich scope of discussion, diverse points of view and comprehensive input to the City – as well as the challenges of defining the input and guidance process and outcomes – were all critical elements in the SEFC process.



CHALLENGE

For municipal authorities and elected officials to encourage and support sustainable community development by ensuring comprehensive environmental, social and economic criteria are set and met in the design and approval of Official Community Plan frameworks.