

New plan will transform Pacific Boulevard into a leafy, livable thoroughfare providing space for cars, bicycles and pedestrians.

# Bravo! Pacific to become a boulevard we'll flock to

Vancouver's Pacific Boulevard is set to become a spectacular tree-lined corridor with room enough for skateboarders, cyclists, pedestrians and cars to coexist without conflict.

Detailed planning is now under way at city

hall to transform the wide, barren street between Burrard and Nelson/Cambie into a vibrant European-style avenue, complete with room for street markets, a streetcar line and likely a station for the proposed rapid transit line to Richmond.

"Pacific was designed by the province originally and has more of a freeway feel than that of an urban street," says Karis Hiebert, one of the city's planners that worked closely with the California-based Citiworks Consultants on a blueprint for the next decade.

"It's not a very friendly environment for cyclists and pedestrians but we discovered we could make it so without affecting its ability to handle the current [motorized] traffic and what we expect to have during the next few years."

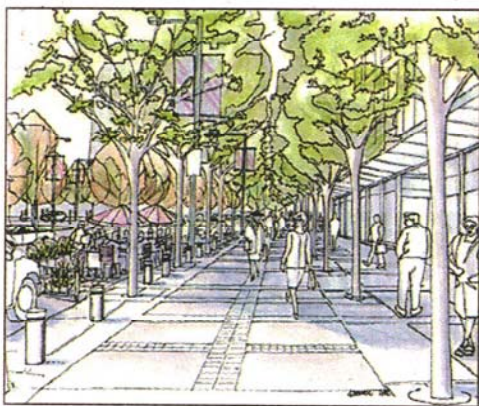
Hiebert says the very characteristics that make the road on the north side of False Creek uninviting can be used to make it somewhere to which residents and visitors will flock.

A tall tree-lined median will run its length, dividing what will become a multi-lane boulevard with calmer cycling and building access lanes running parallel to, but separated from, the main drag, which also will be quiet enough in some spots for kids to play street hockey.

In what is dubbed the High Street —Drake and Cambie — a bustling shopping zone with sidewalk cafes and kiosks will also feature parking zones that will transform quickly into ideal spots for open markets and special events when desired.

Even the awful Granville Street Bridge access loops will be reconfigured to blend in with the surrounding street grid system. And Hiebert says there's a great desire to make the dark and dismal under-bridge areas places of community activity.

City council hopes soon to turn the same visionary team loose on the Granville Mall to see if its collective creativity can be brought to bear on that urban disaster area.



The redesign will feature sidewalk cafes.