Southeast False Creek
Vancouver, Canada

What makes this neighbourhood work for children & youth?

- **Family Housing**: Policy focus on housing to attract families.
- **Community Amenities**: Full-size community center, child care facilities, schools and an interfaith centre.
- **Green Space**: 10+ hectares of park, natural habitat, playgrounds, urban agriculture and a continuous waterfront multi-use path.
- **Transit**: Proximity to bus routes and SkyTrain, future plans for new bus routes and ferry dock, link to the seawall multi-use trail that encourages active transportation.

Originally built to house athletes during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, the Olympic Village accommodations have been transformed into a mixed-use residential community. A key objective of the master plan was to build a neighbourhood where families could access outdoor recreation, community centers, transit, and jobs. In addition to being a model for sustainable development, Southeast False Creek (SEFC) accommodates a healthy social mix of residents, including many families.

The Southeast False Creek Official Development Plan included objectives to develop a variety of residential uses that accommodate households of all income levels. The plan prioritizes family housing and targets a household mix that includes 25-35% family households. The neighbourhood has several affordable and social housing buildings, as well as modest market income housing, supportive permanent housing and co-op housing. The Plan implements Vancouver’s High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines and the Family Rezoning Policy by providing a range of affordable housing choices, encouraging child care facilities, and targeting a percentage of units that are suitable to families. Social and community-oriented policies for families with children and youth encourage child-friendly design to “ensure children have a safe, supportive and stimulating place to learn, experience and grow.”

Families living in the area enjoy proximity to the linear seawall along the waterfront, which is punctuated by a series of parks and open spaces. Allotment gardens, rainwater wetlands, bioswales and a habitat island support nature play and provide opportunities for environmental education.

The award-winning parks along the SEFC waterfront provide continuous play spaces including: soft and hardscaped surfaces, elevation changes, open lawns, shrubs and tree canopies, logs, boulders and blocks for sitting and climbing and public art.

Southeast False Creek (SEFC) was designed to accommodate active transportation by providing safe routes and easy connections to surrounding amenities. Its circulation network links with the seawall, a 28 km multi-use path along Vancouver’s waterfront. SEFC’s sidewalks draw on the shared street (woonerf) concepts, which use paving, landscaping, and traffic calming measures to increase safety and create places for children to play. This contributes to the ability for children and youth to move around their neighbourhood independently and use modes that contribute to healthy lifestyles.

Hinge Park was designed with both active and passive play areas for children. The design combines references to former industrial uses with natural features to create a memorable place that attracts and accommodates people of all ages.

Landscaped courtyards offer a variety of outdoor programming, including childcare play areas, rain gardens and urban agricultural gardens. Courtyards offer enclosed spaces for children to play while supervised from the surrounding units above.

PROJECT INFORMATION

**Location:** Downtown Vancouver

**Developer:** Various, including Millennium Development Group

**Design team:** Various, including VIA Architecture (master plan), PWL Partnership (landscape architect)

**Year Completed:** 2010 - ongoing

**Built Form Typology:**
Tall buildings up to 24 stores, mid-rise up to 11 stores, townhouses

**BREAKDOWN**

11,000 residents, 16,000 by 2020

5,000 residential units by 2020

**Total Area:** 32 hectares, 56 ha by 2020