

# **Sustainability and Stewardship in Southeast False Creek**

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## **Executive Summary**

The City of Vancouver has been working on a plan to build a model sustainable neighbourhood in the area of Southeast False Creek (SEFC), the largest remaining piece of undeveloped City-owned land. This neighbourhood will emphasize a decrease in consumption of energy and resources and in the productions of wastes. The idea for the community has been in existence for approximately ten years and has the planning for the Official Development Plan has just recently begun.

Vancouver City Council accepted the Southeast False Creek Policy Statement in October of 1999, a document outlining the broad vision for the neighbourhood. This report will examine the final planning principle discussed in the Policy Statement: Stewardship. This principle refers to the need for a group that will be responsible for assuring that the vision for SEFC as a sustainable neighbourhood is maintained throughout the development and once the area is built. The group will need to be well versed in the context of SEFC and in practical applications of sustainability at the community level. Its expertise will be used to assist the City of Vancouver in planning for and maintaining the community. It is the nature of this group and the context in which it is to operate that we explore.

Given the nature of sustainable development, the political, historical and natural context of SEFC, as well as the uncertainties associated with a planned neighbourhood that has yet to be erected, the notion of stewardship is a complex one. Under these circumstances we set out to examine what a possible stewardship group in the sustainable neighbourhood of SEFC might look like. We asked the following questions:

How would a stewardship group function to promote sustainability in SEFC?

What kind of responsibility will the group have?

Who would be included in a stewardship group in Southeast False Creek?

To whom will the group be accountable?

These are the questions this report seeks to address.

In order to explore the above questions, there are a number of other important issues that arise. First, what are the history and the context of the plan for a sustainable community in SEFC? Second, what is a sustainable community and what are the principles that are central to this idea. Next, what does stewardship imply and what does it mean for sustainability in an urban community context? Finally, what are some possible organizational structures for community-based groups and what are the important aspects that these groups must address if they are to promote the success of their community?