

Fisherman's Wharf Plan DESIGN GUIDELINES

Updated January 2014





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A. Introduction & Purpose

The *Design Guidelines* for Fisherman's Wharf are intended to assist the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority – GVHA (as the landowner), existing and future tenants, and the City of Victoria (as the regulator) with ensuring that future buildings, improvements, and amenities are compatible with the vision for the Fisherman's Wharf facility.

These guidelines should be used in association with the GVHA's *Fisherman's Wharf Plan (2013)*, which describes the long term development plan for the facility, and forms the basis for zoning amendments to the City of Victoria to reflect the Plan's goals and aspirations. For reference, copies of the Facility Plan map and architectural renderings are included in the Appendix of this document.

These design guidelines support the *Fisherman's Wharf Plan* vision, which is:

"to reinforce and enhance Fisherman's Wharf as an economic generator and as a cohesive community, while retaining its scale, mix of uses, and form and character that define it as a special place and unique attraction for residents and visitors alike" (Fisherman's Wharf Plan, June 2013)

In response to this vision, the *Fisherman's Wharf Plan* has been developed with three overarching objectives:

- 1) The current mix of uses should be retained;
- 2) Future development will be limited, and low in scale, to minimize intrusion on neighbouring properties; and
- 3) The facility is part of Victoria's working harbour lands and, as such, all proposed improvements should be consistent with a *marine activity* idiom.

Fisherman's Wharf has a distinct and special character that has evolved gradually, over time, with few rules and little regulation. It is this lack of *prescription* that has shaped its form and character. These guidelines serve to augment the *Organizing Principles* for the facility as a whole. Described below, these principles introduce the design standards that all future development or improvements should strive to achieve.





Organizing Principles

The key organizing principles guiding development at Fisherman's Wharf also apply to these design guidelines:

- Acknowledge the existing mix of marine uses, and the facility's distinct character and ambience. Fisherman's Wharf already has an identifiable character, and future improvements should not detract from this character.
- Recognize Fisherman's Wharf for its contributions to, and enhancement of, the local economy.
- Acknowledge that future facility plans and uses should reflect, and reinforce, GVHA's established vision, mandate, and principles, which:
 - Support the working harbour, and ensure best water, marine, and marine-related uses;
 - Consider Songhees and Esquimalt Nations' opportunities in the planning process;
 - Support a commitment to sustainability, and incorporate and balance social and environmental impacts, while achieving financial sustainability; and,
 - Act in the best interest of the whole Victoria Harbour.
- Be respectful of neighbours in development considerations.
- Augment and enhance the character of Fisherman's Wharf, and strengthen it as a destination for the community and tourists.
- Encourage and improve linkages between Fisherman's Wharf and the Victoria/Esquimalt waterfronts, reflecting the City of Victoria's Waterfront Walkway objectives.
- Include environmental best practices in the planning and development process.





B. General Building Design

Floating and fixed structures within Fisherman's Wharf are governed by the following guidelines:

- Buildings should be reminiscent of the working waterfront, i.e., generally a variety of forms and shapes, typically containing sloped, shed, or gabled roofs, dormers with fascia accents, and liberal use of colour.
- Hard wearing marine materials, such as corrugated and sheet metal, wood or clapboard siding, cementitious body, shingle, and trim details should be used;
- Nautical detailing, such as rounded openings and metal trim, is encouraged; and
- Ample use of fenestration and entrance ways that are not necessarily symmetrical, to enhance the sense of the eclectic and whimsical, is also encouraged.



Form, Mass & Scale

FIXED STRUCTURES

In the *Facilities Plan*, three areas are identified for fixed commercial buildings (do not float up and down with the tide). While the development concept aims to add amenities to the area, all buildings should be designed to emphasize the ground level, pedestrian environment. A low ratio of building height to façade length should be targeted to maintain an intimate feeling and scale to the area. Form, mass, and scale considerations for these structures include:

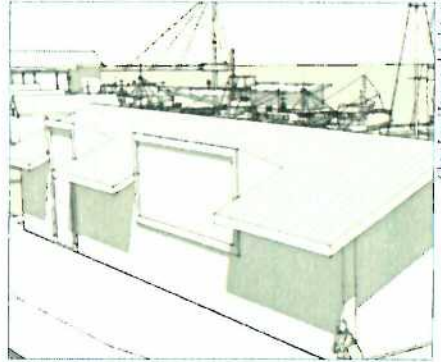
- Maintaining view corridors, particularly on the upland sites;
- Limiting building heights to minimize infringement on views for residential areas along Erie and St. Lawrence Streets, and Shoal Point;



Maintain view corridors. (Source: VicMap)



- Applying simple massing forms that maintain engagement with pedestrians, i.e. limit blank walls, use of roof overhangs;
- Allowing for pedestrian linkages between places of business and the public waterfront;
- Adding architecturally diverse and varied treatments to create a sense of individuality between structures, but not lose the Fisherman's Wharf identity and sense of place;
- Where appropriate, allowing buildings and public walkways to be cantilevered with no required setback from the water; and
- Including opportunities for overlooking fish unloading areas.



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Importance of "working" pier.

FLOATING STRUCTURES

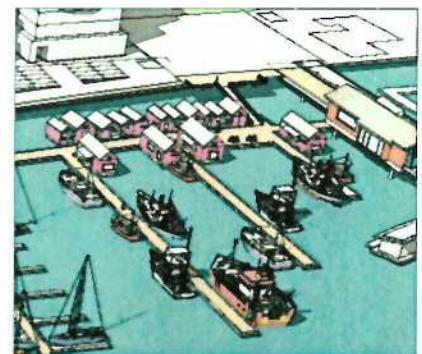
Much of the Fisherman's Wharf character can be attributed to the forms of its floating buildings, which are mostly float homes and commercial units. These are often described as *whimsical*, *fanciful*, or *eclectic*, without being *corny* or *distasteful*. It is important that the form and character of the facility's floating structures maintain this sense of the unusual.

Form, mass, and scale for floating structures should relate to the following guidelines:

- Floating structures, whether float homes or commercial units, should be organized into groupings to create a sense of intimacy, activity, relationship and character, with the docks forming the *street* between opposite structures. Groupings also create better opportunities to provide view corridors seaward;
- Floating structures should be unique, high-quality designs that are complementary to the eclectic environment;
- Diversity of building volume and form is encouraged;
- Long buildings with blank windowless/featureless walls visible from the public realm, including docks, are strongly discouraged;
- Floating commercial structures should be small in scale, and sited close together to create a *storefront* atmosphere; a variety of structure sizes is preferable;



Docks as "streets" & community gathering areas.



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Building groupings create intimacy & activity.



- Construction projections and overhangs (such as canopies and eaves) are encouraged, but should not extend beyond the perimeter of the float structure, except for floating commercial structures with projections over the dock that do not interfere with public travel, access or safety, and comply with GVHA standards; and
- Float homes should be designed and sited with particular regard to their orientation, privacy, views, and setbacks from adjacent float homes.



Colourful fixed or awning overhangs.

Roof Forms

- Roof construction for the fixed and floating structures should either be sloped or, where flat, treated as a roof deck.
- Gable, shed, hip, and flat roofs, including dormer projections are preferred.
- Awnings, overhangs, and shed covers are encouraged and should relate to the height above the deck level.



A variety of roof forms is encouraged.



Materials & Colours

- The scale of application may vary between the differing forms of structures, with the fixed structures generally being larger, thus more appropriate for larger expanses of similar materials.
- A range of façade treatment materials and combinations of materials are acceptable, and are identified below. Materials should be weather-tight, marine-oriented, and durable.

ROOF FINISHES

- Materials traditional and suitable to a marine environment should be used, including metal and other standing seam products, fiberglass or simulated shingle, or cedar shingle/shake.

EXTERIOR WALLS & FINISHES

- High quality building materials associated with a harbour setting are encouraged, such as corrugated metal cladding, horizontal siding, board and batten, and cementitious and other panel board. These materials may be further enhanced by the introduction of transoms, clerestories, and awnings.

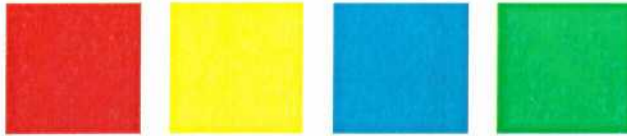




- Trim, including cornices, corner boards, windows, doors, window boxes, bay windows, brackets, exterior posts and railings, and exposed rafter ends are encouraged to enrich building character.
- Personalized *knickknacks* that do not clutter, but add to the eclectic nature of the floating buildings, are encouraged.

COLOURS

- All colours should be derived from a marine environment, with an emphasis on vivid hues, including rich reds, yellows, blues, whites, and greens, using a painted or stained base.
- Multiple colours on individual exterior walls are discouraged.
- Window/door frames and other trim (including awnings and other projections) should be highlighted in colours complementary to the base wall colour.



C. Environmental Considerations

Foreshore and waterfront environments are unique in their physical challenges and opportunities, constantly changing with the rhythms of the seasons, the weather, and the tides.

As a waterfront neighbourhood, Fisherman's Wharf land forms and natural features are assets, with its buildings enhancing these existing conditions. Any planning for modifications to these conditions should consider adjacent land uses, and maintaining the foreshore environment.

In embracing the principle of sustainability, the GVHA has adopted environmental initiatives that include environmental standards for marina operations and commercial clients. Future development initiatives at Fisherman's Wharf should be reviewed to ensure compliance with these standards:

- To avoid deleteriously impact to the head of Heron Cove, special attention should be paid to pathway design.
- To reduce run-off, permeable pavers should be used as hard surface materials for parking and pedestrian pathways.
- Landscaped buffers should be incorporated between hard surface areas or buildings on the upland and the foreshore environment, except in strategic areas such as cantilevered walkways around the outside of buildings (see Facility Plan – Appendix A) or ramp/loading zone entrances to the wharves.



Natural landscaping to the water's edge.



- Buffer areas should incorporate native plant/grass species suited to maritime conditions along the shoreline interface.
- Vertical seawalls or retaining walls in/near the high water mark or intertidal areas should be avoided.
- All works within the marine environment should follow Provincial and Federal best management practices.
- All solid waste collection areas should be properly ventilated, or in attractively screened outdoor enclosures.
- New buildings should incorporate sustainable building techniques.



D. Safety & Security

To promote a sense of safety and security, which are paramount to the enjoyment of public and private spaces:

- New buildings should address current principles related to *Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (CPTED) (refer to the guidelines adopted by the City of Victoria).
- Develop well-defined public/private spaces that are adequately lit, and have clear sight lines.
- New activities should consider operation times, and aim to appropriately overlap with other activities, maximizing opportunities for *eyes on the street* in public and private areas.

E. Circulation, Connectivity, Paths & Parking

The enjoyment of a place is often determined by initial impressions, and ease of access. Waterfronts have two *front doors* – water's edge and street front – to consider. Whether arriving by boat, car, ferry, bike, or on foot, a clear, welcoming presence is important.

- Waterfront areas should support distinct gateway features at key arrival points. In form, character, and detailing, new development should clearly articulate its identity and type of activity.
- A clear definition of the marina facility is served by highly visible key features that *book-end* the area, improving the sense of place and overall navigation of the wharf.
- Parking areas should be clearly defined, and pedestrian routes/plazas should be well connected to internal and external amenities.
- Building entrances should be highlighted by such things as overhangs, porticos, or awnings, with primary entrances clearly expressed, and accessible from the parking area or water's edge. Access from pedestrian paths should be a paramount design consideration.
- Physical accessibility should be maximized for all members of the community.
- Priority for paths and roadways should be indicated with physical features (i.e. raised pedestrian crossings, surface material differentiation between uses, and removal of barriers to pedestrian activity).



Definition between pedestrian & vehicle areas.



- Pathways should tie into the City of Victoria's *Harbour Pathway Plan*, and Fisherman's Wharf Park.
- Pathway materials should differentiate pedestrian areas from vehicle areas with pavers, cedar decking, or other hard surface, permeable materials.
- Parking areas should be broken up with plantings, or physical features to avoid expanses of paved surfaces.
- Physical landscape features, along with signage, should be used to indicate parking areas.



F. Lighting

The GVHA has initiated an upland lighting fixture regime that should be continued throughout.

- Light fixtures should be of a high quality, and human scale.
- Lighting should correspond to the overall architectural concept, and reflect the marine context.
- Pedestrian pathway lighting should be sited downward to prevent overspill, and limit night sky light pollution.
- Dock lighting, adjacent to the commercial floating units, should not be overbearing, but add to its vibrancy.
- Other dock lighting should be consistent throughout. Dock lighting of the float home neighbourhood should illuminate sufficiently to provide safety and security, but not be intrusive or overbearing.

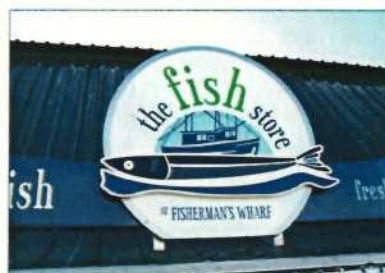




G. Signage

Signage is a critical element of the Fisherman's Wharf *milieu* and, as such, should reflect its unique character. Signage should indicate uses, and provide gateways to areas of activity.

- Upland area signage that communicates directions, gives instructions, or outlines GVHA or other regulatory body regulations, should be consistent throughout, and simple in design and form. A single sign conveying multiple pieces of information should be adopted in place of multiple signs visually and physically *cluttering* the property.
- As access to Fisherman's Wharf can be by land or water, signage communications must consider the multi-modal approaches to the facility.
- Banners and flags are iconic maritime features, and should be considered in the overall signage strategy.
- Backlit, plastic signs, or flashing electronic signs are to be avoided.
- Floating commercial unit signage should evoke a sense of whimsy, playfulness, curiosity, or quaintness.
- Commercial unit signage can be wall-mounted, bracketed raised letters, window lettering, or inscribed banners/canopies:
 - Signage should be colourful, but not overbearing, with a variety of letter types and shapes.
 - Lighting should be indirect, or spotlight, unless it forms part of the integrity of the sign, such as neon lettering.

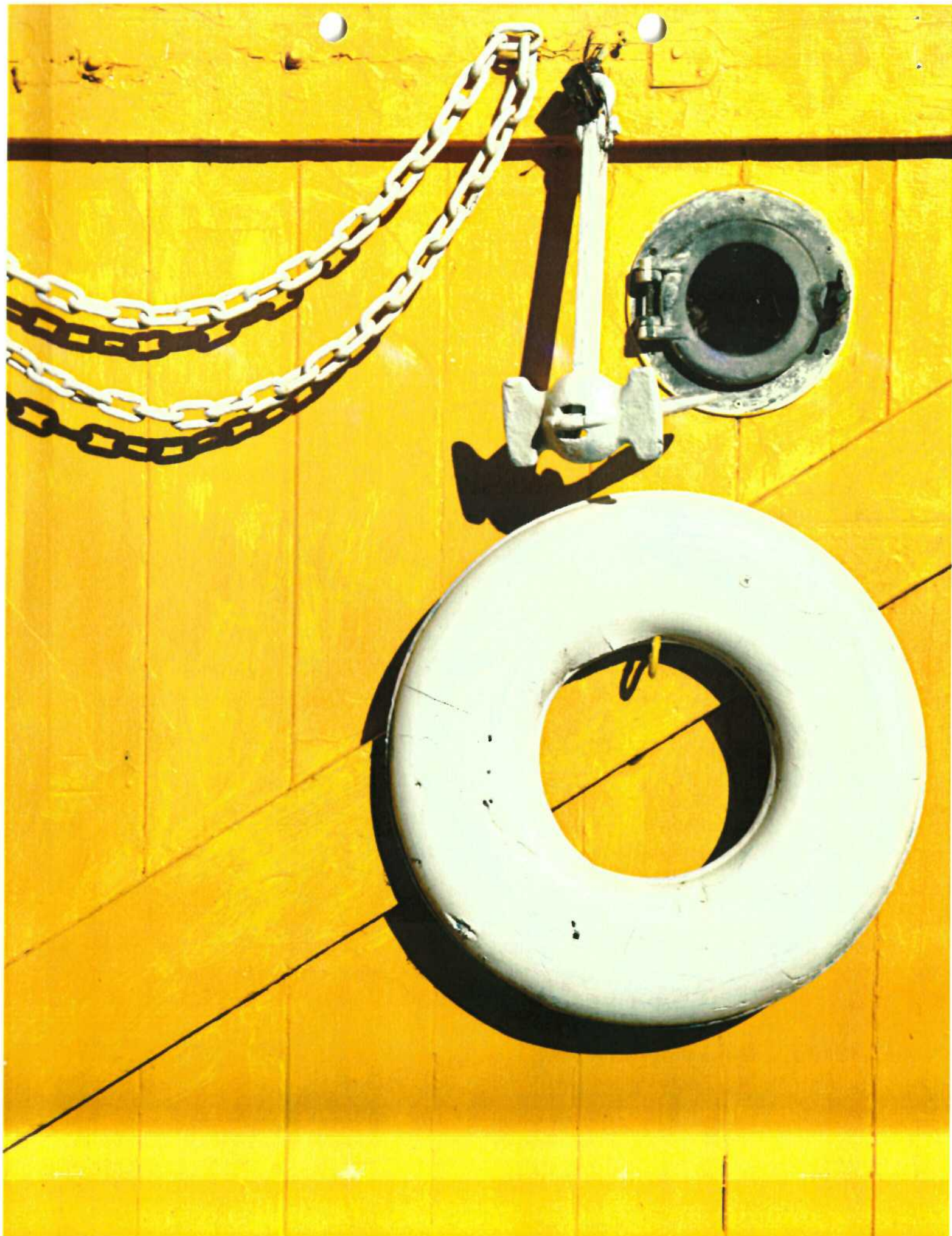


H. Outdoor Space & Landscaping

Well-designed outdoor space and landscaping adds to the quality of life in communities. Given the configuration of the upland, there is limited opportunity for a large landscape of plaza features. Where appropriate:

- Patios, decks, and other outdoor spaces should be well connected both physically and visually with other waterfront activities, and be oriented to maximize view opportunities.
- Physical comfort should be considered, including the use of windscreens and arbours, or planting for sun protection.
- Planting schemes based on native or natural looking landscapes, with reduced water and maintenance requirements, should predominate.
- Landscaping should relate to Fisherman's Wharf Park improvements.
- Window box gardens on float homes and floating commercial units are encouraged to add colour, vibrancy, and personality to the outdoor environment.







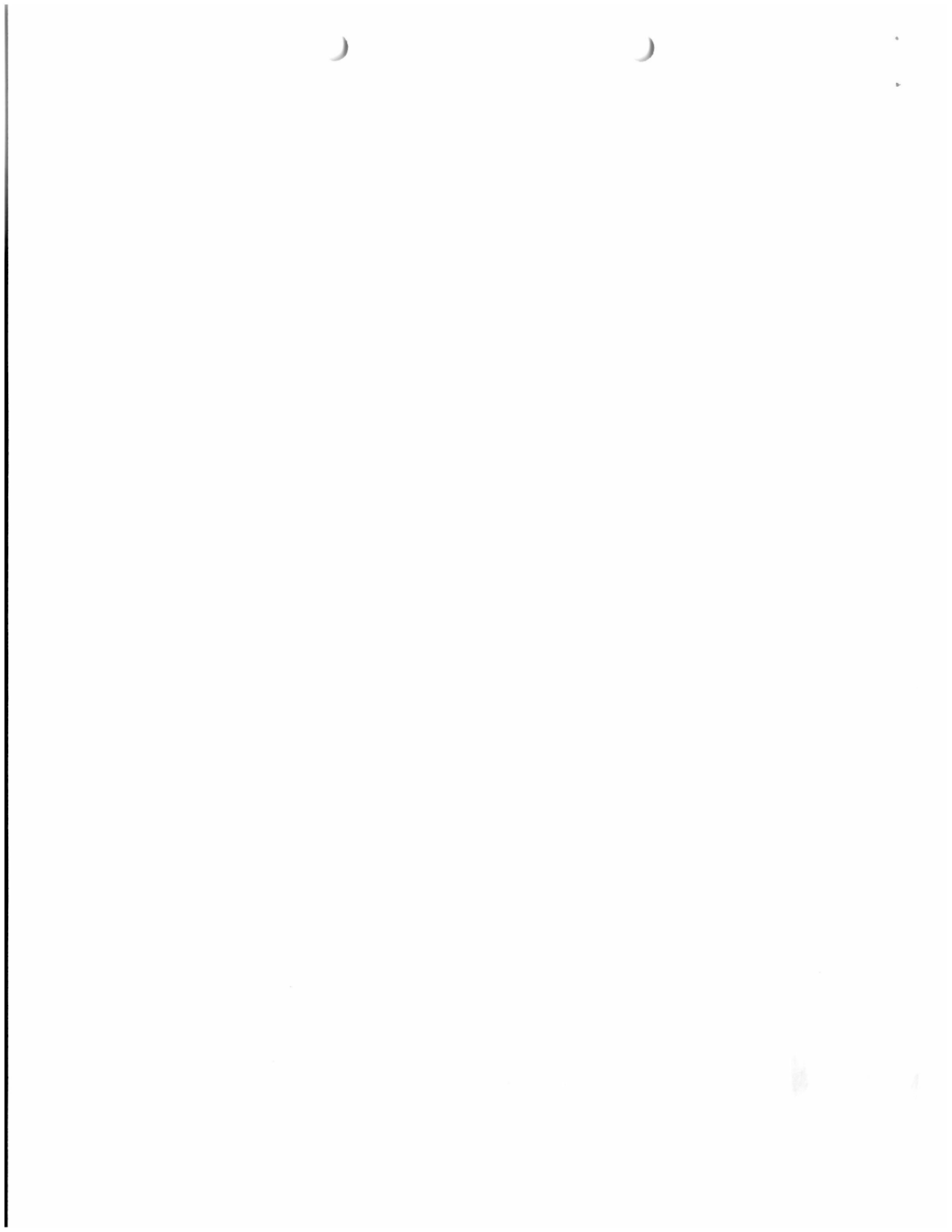
APPENDICES

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- | Architectural Renderings



Fisherman's Wharf Design Guidelines







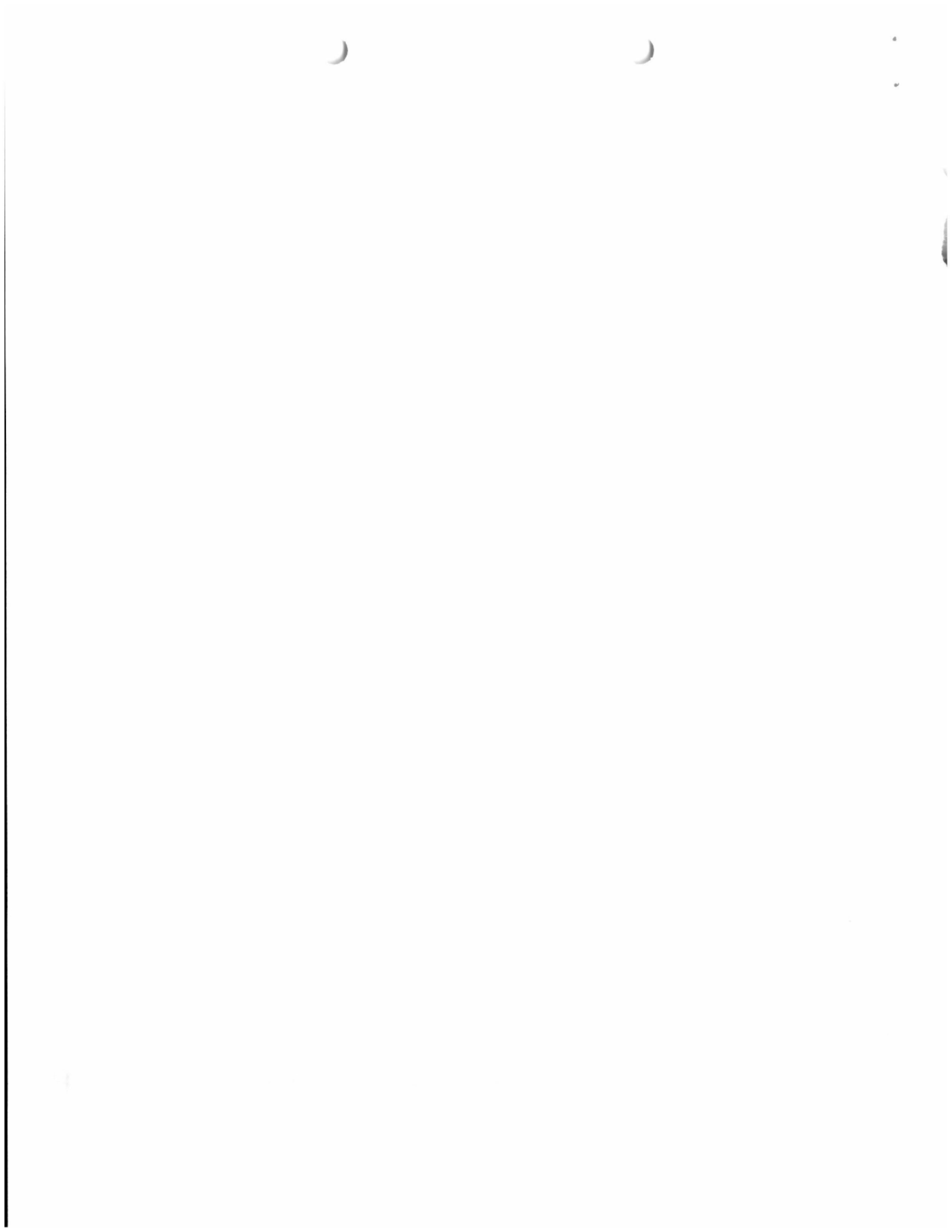
Greater Victoria Harbour Authority | Fisherman's Wharf Plan

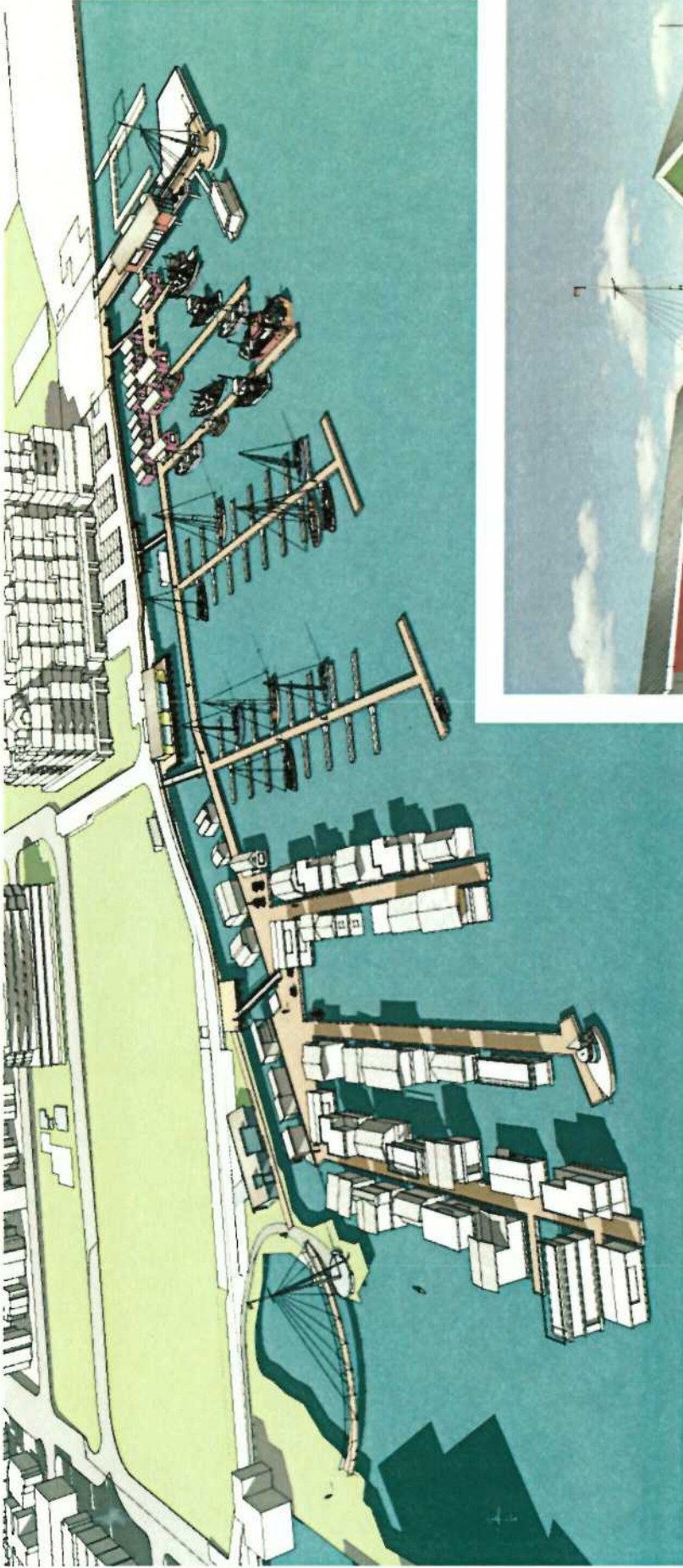
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CITY SPACES

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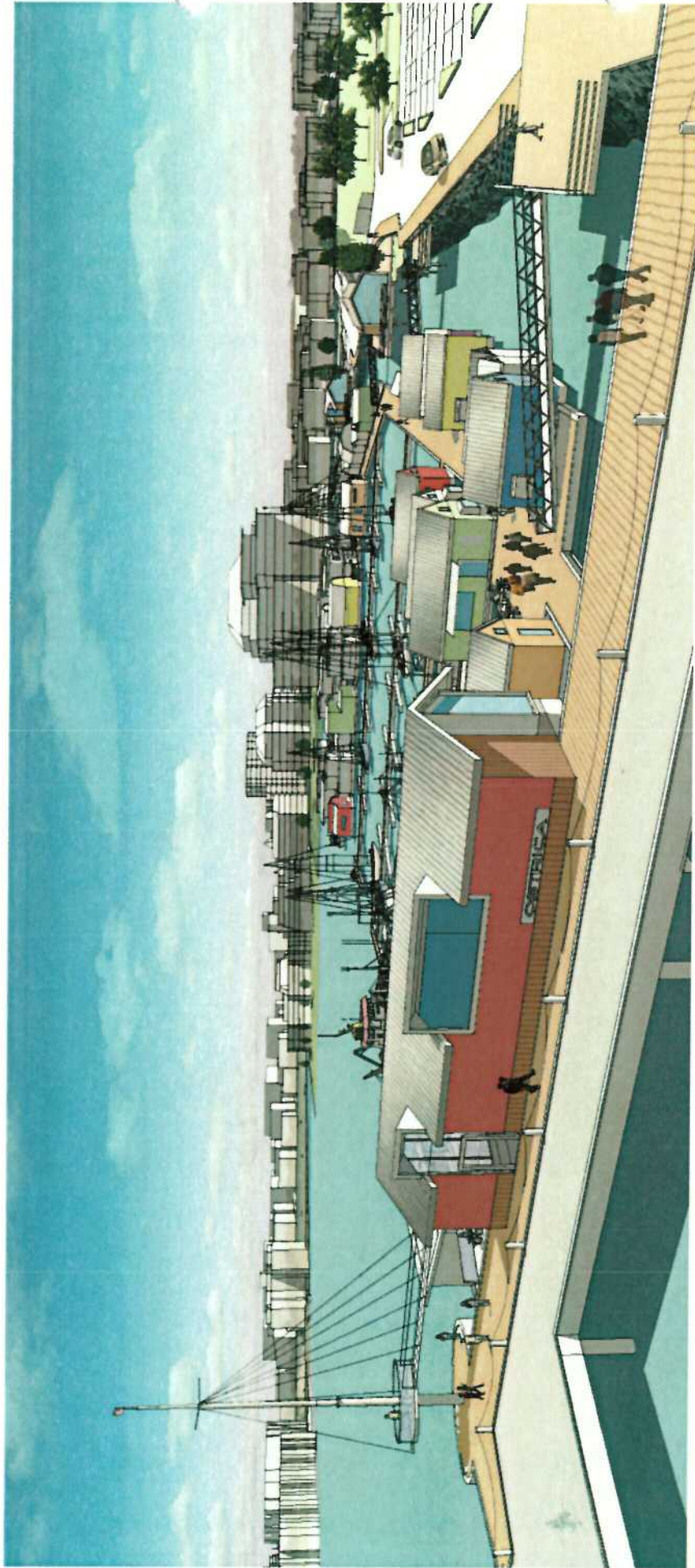
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