

lane tool kit
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influx masterplan : hastings corridor individual design

Lanes are a significant component of the streetcar city. In addition to allowing a front-oriented streetscape while relegating services to the lane, the lane is a landscape of its own. Lanes can function as a social space, support multiple uses, incorporate ecological processes, and create a fine-grained pedestrian network.

The lane is an ideal social condenser, acquiring significance and value with repeated social interactions. "Back-lanes provide a semi-public, intimate setting for casual social interactions which may not be possible in more formal, public settings such as street-facing front yards (Martin, p.146)." According to William H. Whyte, places stimulate conversation when they have features or activities that encourage comment. The lane gains value as people pass one another regularly, exchange casual greetings and begin to congregate routinely. To capitalize on these opportunities, lanes should be comfortable and provide places to linger and socialize.

Currently, service and parking functions dominate lanes, resulting in numerous cars, dumpsters, and puddles. According to Cynthia Girling and Ron Kellett, "The intensity and complexity of modern cities mandate that we move beyond a narrow, functional, single-purpose infrastructure" (2005). This approach to streetmaking is also advocated in *The Boulevard Book*, resulting in multi-purpose streets that provides for layers uses including pedestrian and traffic movement, social encounters, and recreation (Jacobs et al). Service functioning should be retained but strategies will be implemented to create



a "front" character of the lane by integrating residential, commercial, pedestrian, and service uses.

Sustainability is also a design consideration for the lanes. In *The Granite Garden*, A.W. Spirn (1984) suggests that the city needs to be recognized as a part of nature and should account for and incorporate natural processes. In addition to the ecological and aesthetic benefits that trees and vegetation provide, exposure to landscaping has psychological and health benefits (Ulrich) and people have emotional, symbolic, and spiritual ties to trees (Platt et al). Therefore, vegetation and ecological processes should be introduced into the lane wherever possible.

Lane networks already provide a choice

of paths to local destinations for vehicles but improving the pedestrian experience can enhance the local economy. According to established pedestrian preferences, lane upgrades should create a route that hides and reveals views, has a strong sense of enclosure, transitions between wider and narrower spaces, provides chances to rest, intermingles soft and hard surfaces, and includes trees and vegetation (Moudon). A stimulating pedestrian environment also exposes land uses and activities, so preserving lane processes can be an asset.

Toronto's street enhancement programs have gleaned valuable lessons about streetscape renewal. Total design consistency is not an achievable goal, but basic themes and variations add coherence and richness to the streetscape. Upgrades should be implemented in small, phased interventions over time, providing the opportunity for learning and change and for the evolution of buildings and uses. Finally, publicly sponsored street improvements act as a stimulus for the private sector to upgrade adjacent properties, which can lead to economic benefits for the community (ibid). Reorienting business and residences to the lane in a phased process can stimulate the community and economy.

Incorporating pedestrian-oriented social spaces, multiple functions, and nature into the lane will result in an intimate yet dynamic space. Extending this treatment through Burnaby Heights retail district will create delightful lane walk that has the potential to stimulate commerce, create new local destinations, and support the Hastings corridor.

goal • objectives • principles • tool kit of strategies

goal —————> objectives

Develop a tool kit of strategies that can be utilized to create lanes that are hospitable to social, pedestrian and mixed use activities, while maintaining necessary service functions.



1. Provide places to linger and socialize



2. Integrate pedestrian and vehicular uses



3. Introduce trees, vegetation, and ecological processes



4. Create destinations and variations in lanes to for a rewarding pedestrian experience.



5. Establish a stakeholder consultation process



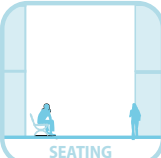




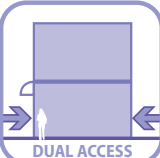
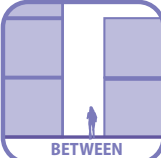

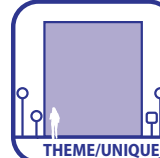







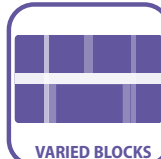




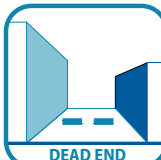




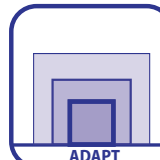








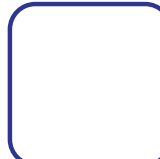









goal • objectives • principles • tool kit of strategies

lane tool kit

principles

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Create public and private gathering places | Accommodate parking in non-intrusive ways | Reduce impact of service functions | Reduce through traffic | "Green" the lane | Modify building orientation and access | Create a sense of enclosure and transition | Create variety with different lane types | Implement consistent design incrementally |

tool kit of strategies

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scale

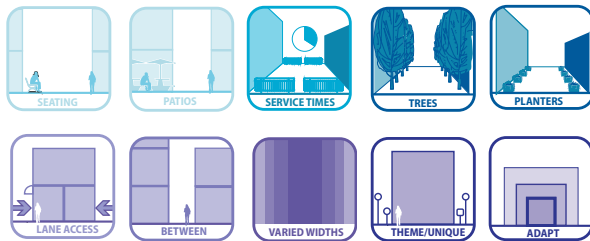


tool kit application

phase one

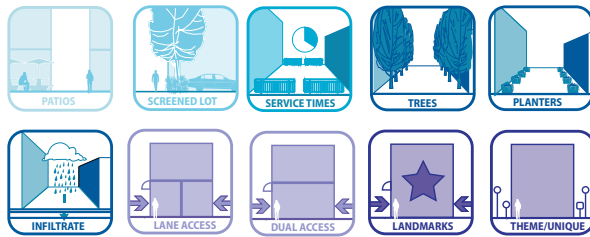
- different character with minimal formal changes
- altered service functioning
- intervention based on existing destinations
- 40'0" service lane

strategies applied



phase two

- response to future development
- intimate, pedestrian-oriented front condition
- 20-0" service lane
- public and private social spaces
- north-south connections



Conclusion

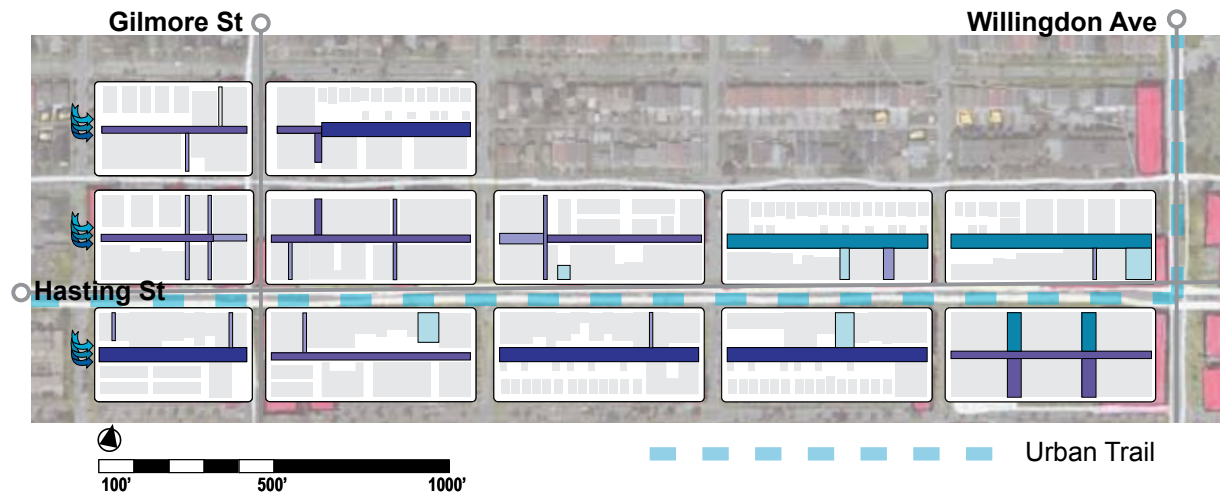
Application of the lane tool kit strategies results in lanes that prioritize social, pedestrian and mixed use functions, supporting the local community as well as economy and transforming the lane into a public living space. Immediate implementation would be centered on existing destinations along the Hastings corridor and focus on altered service functioning rather than physical form.

As development occurs over time, more substantial formal changes would take place. The different lane widths and configurations will lead to different conditions and atmospheres within the lane and block. The permitted degree of vehicular and service access will influence building program and

use, which could result in the formation of a variety of distinct districts. Restaurant areas would cluster around full service lanes and services and crafts bordering on narrower, more intimate lanes with smaller stores. Lane-oriented storefronts could provide low-rent opportunities, resulting in vibrant art or youth-oriented scenes.

Implementing the lane tool kit will create a more diverse retail and social environment along the Hastings corridor, with a fine-grained network of paths leading to numerous attractions and services. Creating lane-oriented services and gathering places can serve to stimulate the Burnaby Heights retail district, attracting more people to the main street-oriented businesses as well.

Long-term vision: Burnaby Heights Lane Walk network that responds to future development and connects the north and south sides of Hastings Street.



References

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