

Sydney, like Vancouver, has always had a strong relationship with its harbor. Its two famous icons, the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, are harbor structures and constitute the essence of the city's self-image. From the earliest settlement, the city became an active seaport with commercial contact to the Pacific islands, India, China, South Africa and the Americas.

Sydney is one of the largest cities in the world in terms of area. The metropolitan area of Sydney covers some 1,600 square kilometers (620 sq. miles), equal to London and more than double the size of New York. The City of Sydney, which is the central business core of the city, is a tight and relatively small city center. The form of the city center reflects its harbor setting. Similarly to Vancouver, the City of Sydney is bound on three sides by water and is located on a narrow, intensely developed peninsula. The city displays a pre-industrial street pattern of narrow crooked streets.

Sydney is the major financial and business center of Australia and a significant node in the Asia-Pacific Region. Within the City of Sydney, some 200,000 people work in 10.5 million square feet of floor space. This population generates nearly half a million traffic movements every day. From 1991 to 1999, a period characterized by inner city desertions, especially in the United States, the number of inner city residents in Sydney more than trebled, from 7,300 to 24,000. The result of this growth, as one might imagine, is that all space in the City of Sydney is heavily contested.

Given that the harbor is the defining element in the image of the city, it is remarkable that the desirability of the water's edge, as a place to live and work, is a recent phenomenon. For much of the city's history, its downtown port, located in Sydney Cove, was regarded as an unsavory part of the city. Circular Quay was a working part of the city, and living conditions in the now fashionable Rocks area were so poor as to support an outbreak of the bubonic plague as late as 1900. Reflecting the lack of appreciation the water held for early Sydney residents, the Town Hall and the commercial center of the city were established away from the water's edge, on higher ground. It was only in the 1950s, with the removal of the city's statutory 150-foot height limit, that the waterfront became an attractive commercial location.

The Vancouver waterfront

Growth management initiatives have been in place in Vancouver's metropolitan area since the 1960s. One of the earliest was the Agricultural Land Reserve, adopted to preserve Fraser Valley farmland. In a province with mountainous terrain, the protection of flat agricultural land is of prime importance. More recently, the Liveable Region Strategy has directed new growth into a network of nine regional town centers of higher densities and mixed uses. Downtown Vancouver is the primary center of the Strategy.

Vancouver has become a model for other cities, not only as a result of its waterfront redevelopment but also in terms of its planning process. The development process in Vancouver comprises several stages. These include the creation of a policy statement to guide development planning, the cre-