

Augmented Reality

Reconnecting The Shipyards to Nature

A CityStudio project one-pager by Devan Balcombe, Natalie Marcha, and Julia Santana Moioli

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Background:	The North Shore region is known for its ocean shorelines, lush forests, and snow-capped mountains. And yet, the Shipyards District is almost entirely devoid of natural space – nature has been replaced by concrete and metal. Prior to the development of the shipbuilding industry, the area was a virgin forest abundant in natural resources that served First Nations communities (Chief Dan George, 1972). After colonization and industrialization, over 80% of the original shoreline was altered (Tsleil-Waututh Nation, 2017, p.6).
Relevance to City Goals:	Augmented Reality will connect The Shipyards space to the City of North Vancouver’s strategic goal to become the “healthiest small city in the world” (City of North Vancouver, 2021). By reconnecting The Shipyards space to the natural world, the AR experience and accompanying social media campaign will ask residents to “lead the way in climate action and act as steward[s] of the environment for future generations” (City of North Vancouver, 2021, para. 8).
Overview of the project:	Augmented Reality is an AR app designed for the Shipyards District which erases colonial and industrial structures. Users will instead be greeted with images of the North Shore pre-colonization in all its natural beauty. The experience reconnects the Shipyards space to nature and challenges residents to re-examine the history of the space a strive towards a more sustainable future. The AR experience will be released simultaneously with a social media campaign designed to bring awareness to the current climate crisis and encourage residents to envision a positive environmental future for North Vancouver. User of the AR experience will be able to take a screenshot of their view and share it online with the hashtags "BeforeTheNorthShore" and "RestoreTheNorthShore." The campaign will encourage residents to share their vision of a vibrant, environmentally friendly future for the city.
Project Details:	The main purpose of the AR project is to tell the untold histories of The Shipyards space and promote awareness of the ocean environmental issues that are happening steps away. We will encourage visitors to act and participate in sustainable practices that will help the ocean environmental and climate crises.
Key findings:	We found that the Shipyards District needed community building and re-examining in times of COVID-19. AR provides the perfect opportunity to re-animate space in a safe, physically distanced manner. By creating an online community, residents and visitors will still be able to engage in community and placemaking. For our app, permanent QR codes will be placed at various popular locations at The Shipyards: at the end of the Burrard Pier, beside Pier 7 Restaurant and the St. Roch Dock, on Cates Deck, and near the fountain in front of Lonsdale Quay. These locations have been chosen due to their popularity and proximity to the water – offering the best vantage point to connect people to the ocean and North Shore mountains.
Next steps:	Before realizing this project, thoughtful consultation must be done with the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səl̓ílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations on whose territory the Shipyards District resides.

This student project was developed as part of a CityStudio North Vancouver course collaboration.

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