

As a result of community concern over the effects of development on the low-income community in the DTES, Council asked “that a social impact study be conducted to assess the effect on the existing low-income community of new developments in the historic area and where opportunities for enhanced affordability and livability may be achieved.” (Jan 2010)

What is a Social Impact Assessment? (SIA)

Development can bring benefits (e.g. new housing) and costs (e.g. feelings of exclusion) to a community.

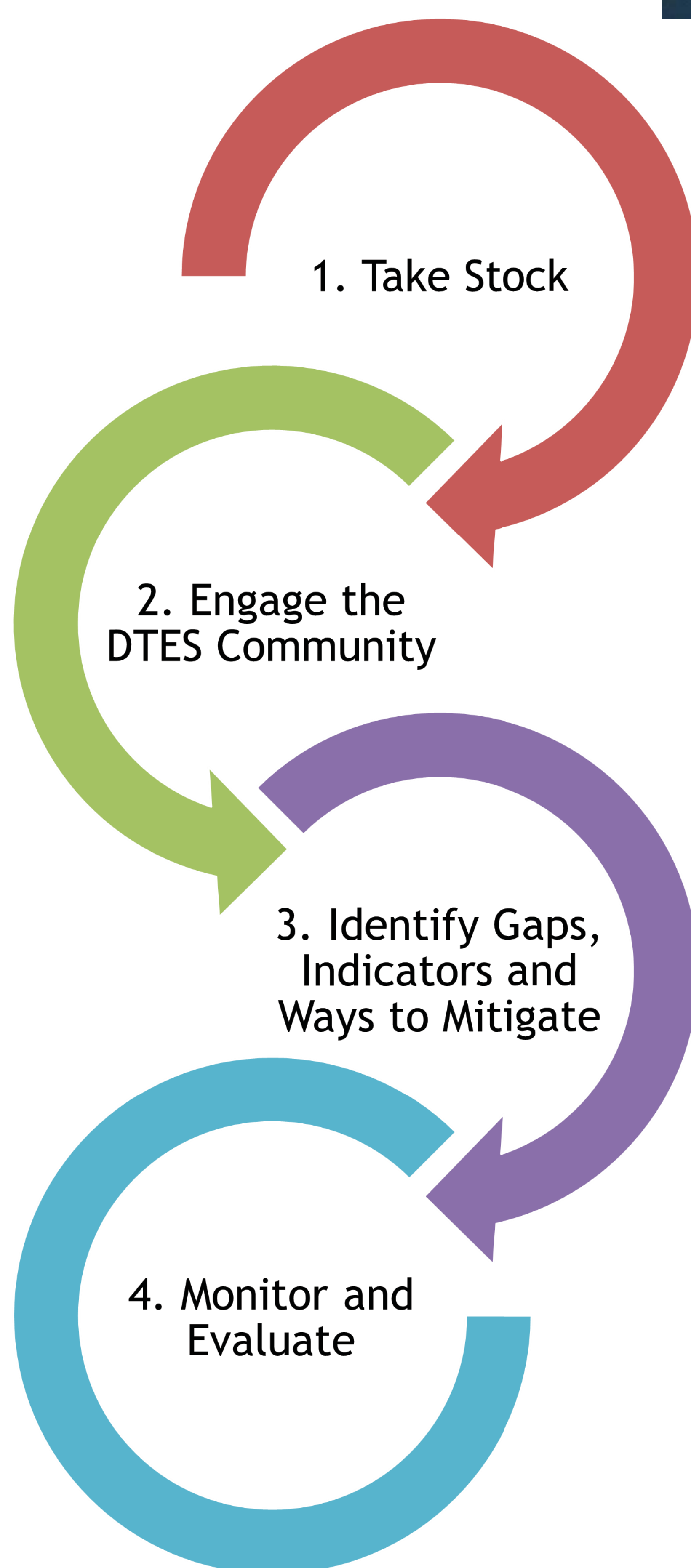
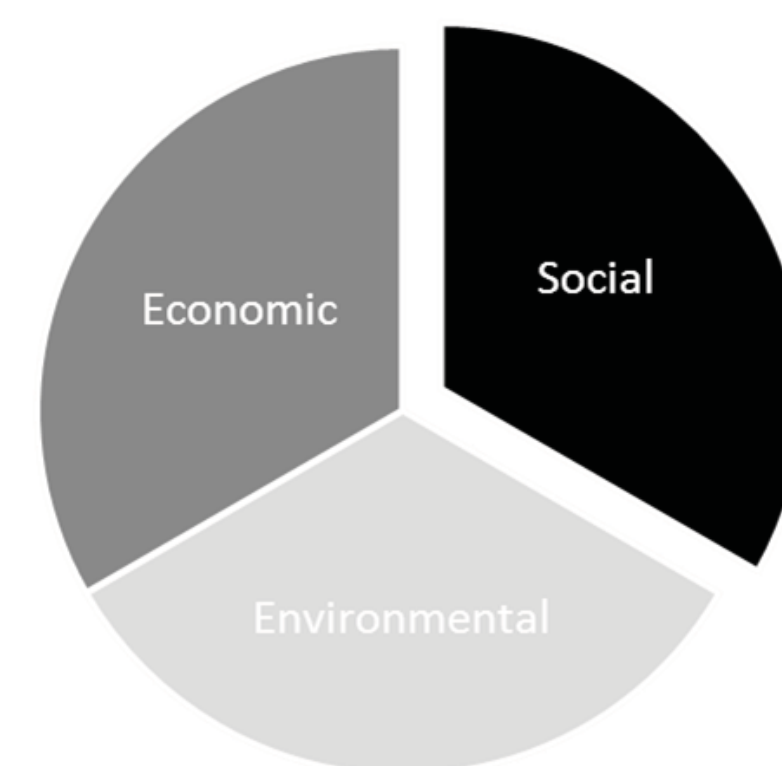
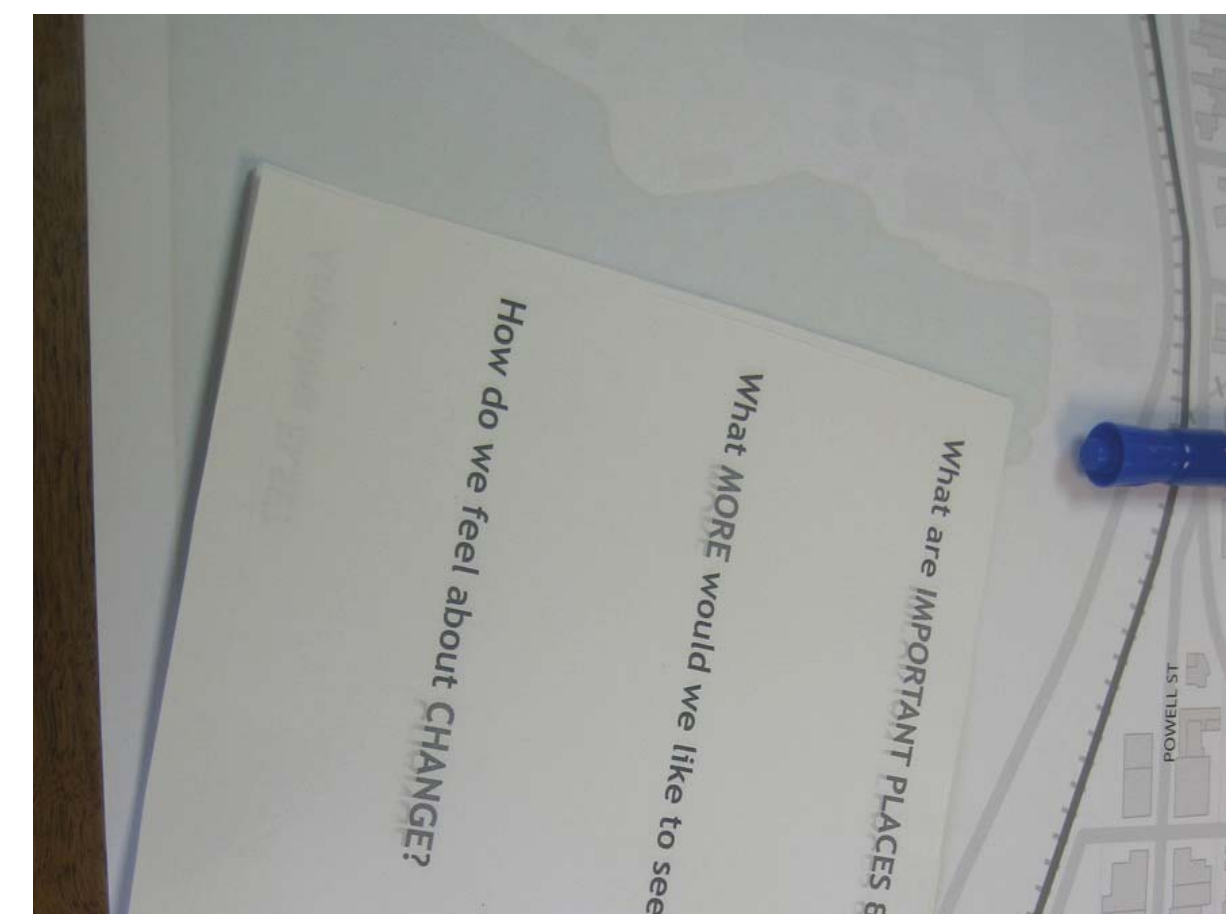
SIA is a tool used to understand, monitor and evaluate social impacts resulting from development.

SIA helps communities, planners, and governments:

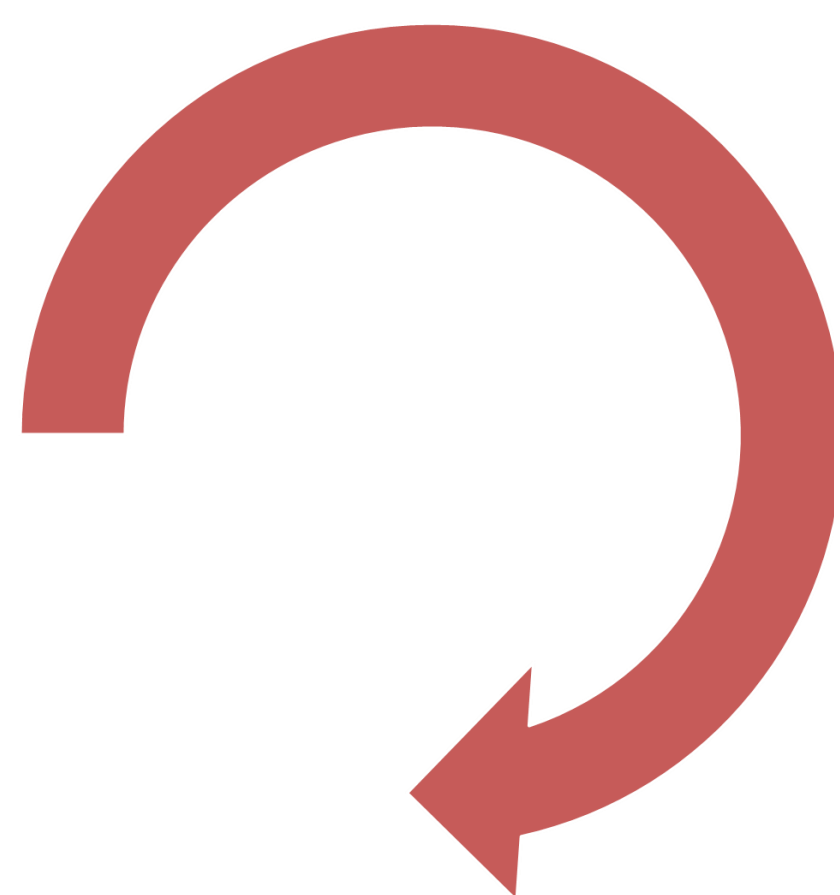
- Maintain places and spaces important to the health and well-being of vulnerable residents
- Focus future planning where gaps exist
- Monitor and measure progress and impacts of development and gentrification

SIA is internationally recognized and used in many cities around the world to improve planning

The DTES SIA consisted of 4 phases:



PHASE ONE: Taking Stock



Method:

- Review of key social indicators (e.g. income, health, housing) from year 2000 to present
- Literature review
- Key informant conversations
- DTES profile
- Census data
- Related planning policies, by-laws, development guidelines

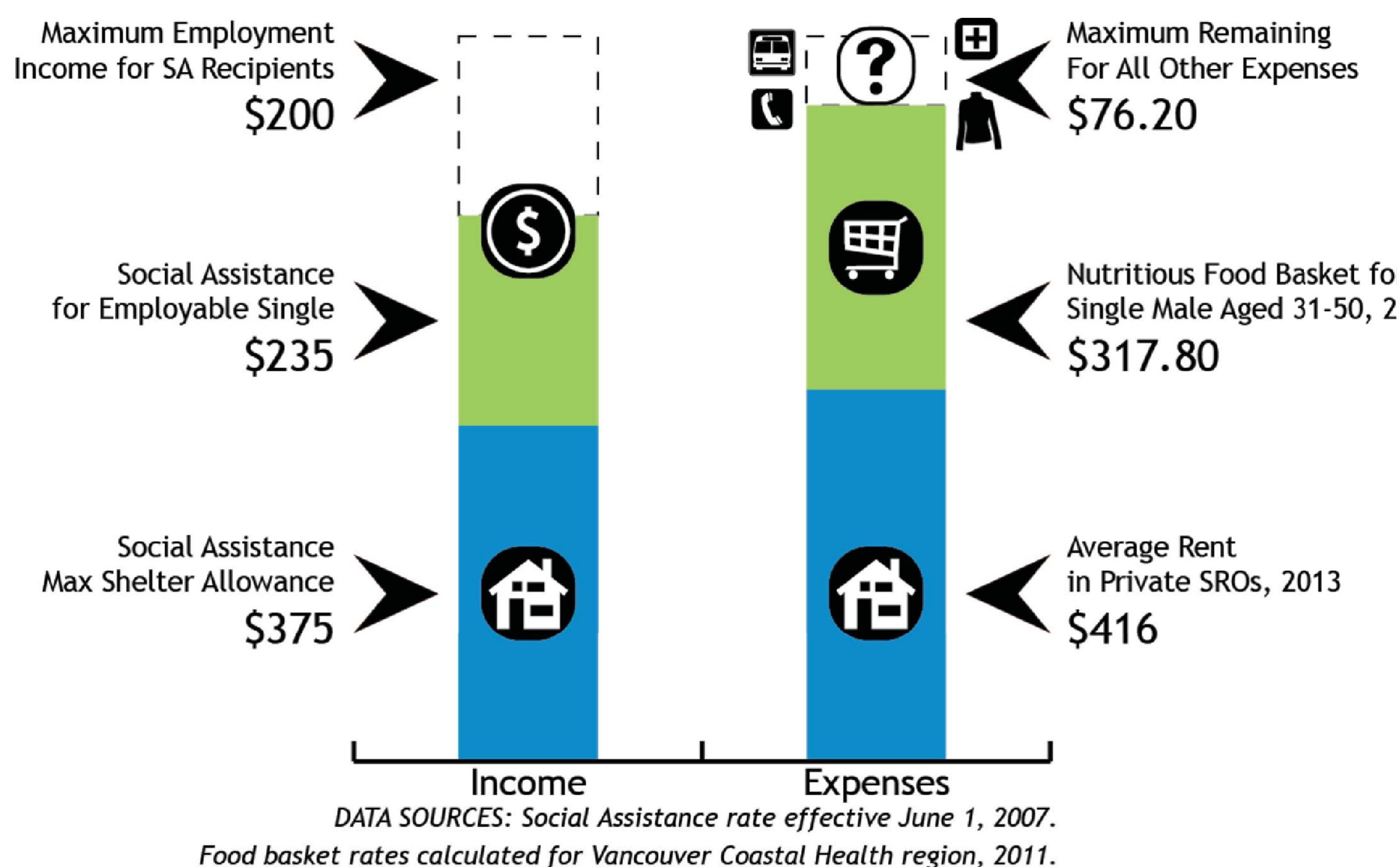
Key Social Indicators:

Housing

- Since 2011, the number of people found homeless in Vancouver has stabilized at approximately 1,600 individuals. The most significant change is the composition of Vancouver’s homeless populations: since 2005, the number of unsheltered individuals has declined by 54% (318) and 72% (554) more are now sheltered.

(Source: preliminary results: City of Vancouver 2013 Vancouver Homeless Count)

- Vacancy rates in East Hastings private market rentals began to reflect low citywide trends in 2008 (ranging between approximately 0.5 and 2%).
- In 2011, the SRO vacancy rate in the DTES decreased to 2% from 3% in 2009 and 14% in 2001.
- The percentage of private SROs renting at shelter component of Income Assistance decreased to 27% in 2011 from 39% in 2009 and 67% in 2007.



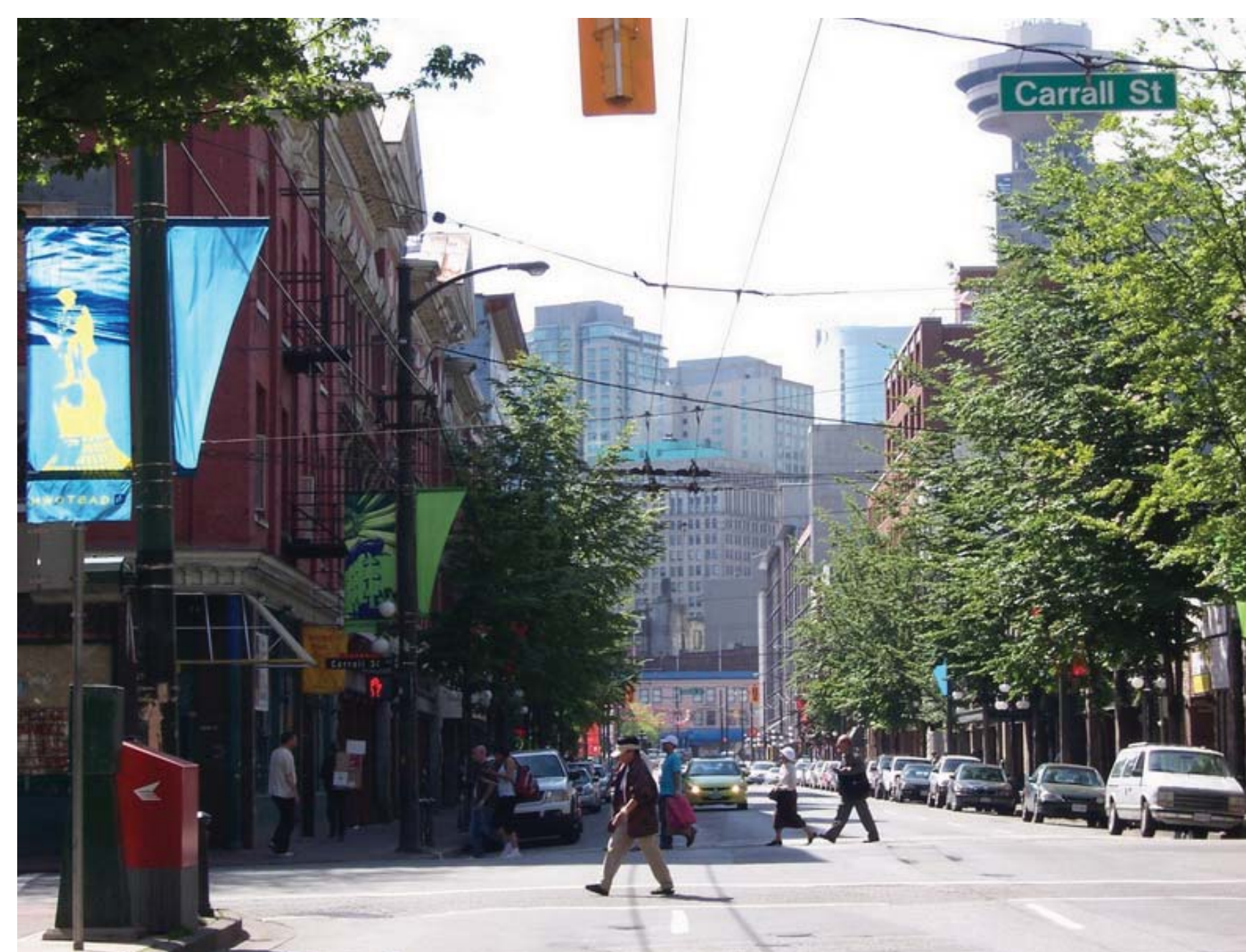
Affordability

The social assistance rate has not increased since June 2007. Between 2007 and 2011, the proportion of SRO units renting at the shelter rate decreased from 67% to 27% in the Downtown Eastside.

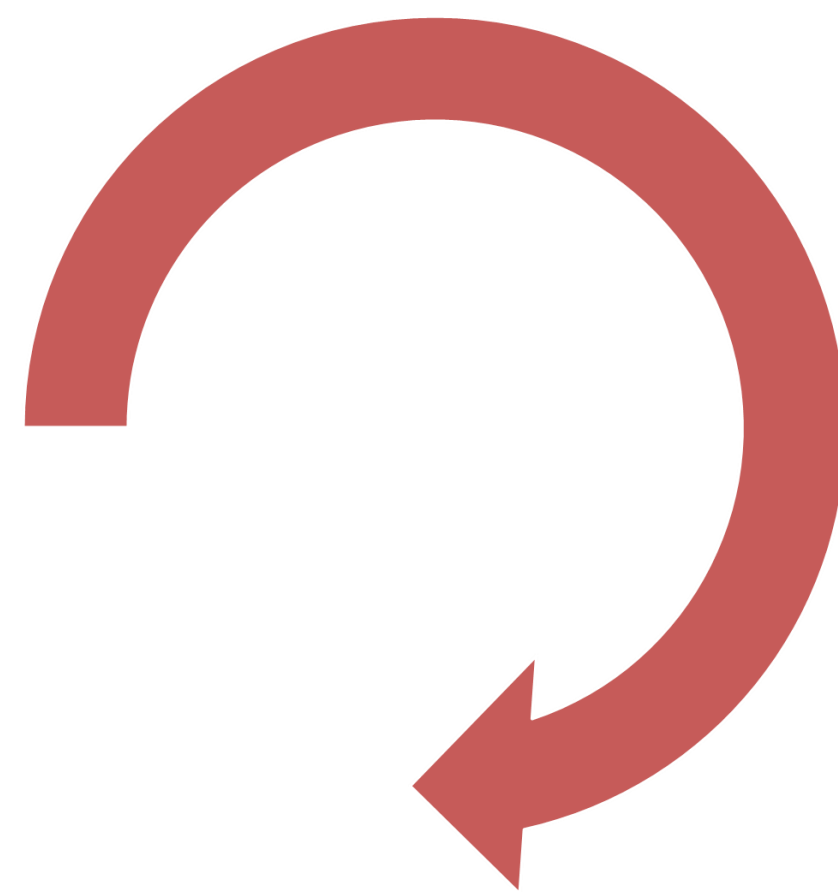
Livelihoods

- Median income increased in Vancouver and in the DTES between 2000 and 2005 by 13%.
- The proportion of low-income households decreased between 2000 and 2005 in the DTES.
- The number of social assistance cases has increased in in the welfare offices serving the DTES. Cases have decreased citywide.

No census data are available beyond 2005.



PHASE ONE: Taking Stock



Health and Well-being

- The Early Development Instrument (EDI) has decreased in Strathcona, indicating a reduction in children who are not school ready. This decrease is greater than the decrease seen citywide.
- Death rates are higher in the DTES than citywide. However, they have been decreasing

Safety

- Crime rates as a whole have slightly decreased in the DTES.
- However, the overall decrease was caused by a 20% decrease in property crimes. Violent crimes and other criminal code (mischief, bail violations, disturbing the peace, arson, prostitution and offensive weapons) crimes have increased.
- Citywide there has been a decrease property and violent crimes, and other criminal code crimes have remained the same.

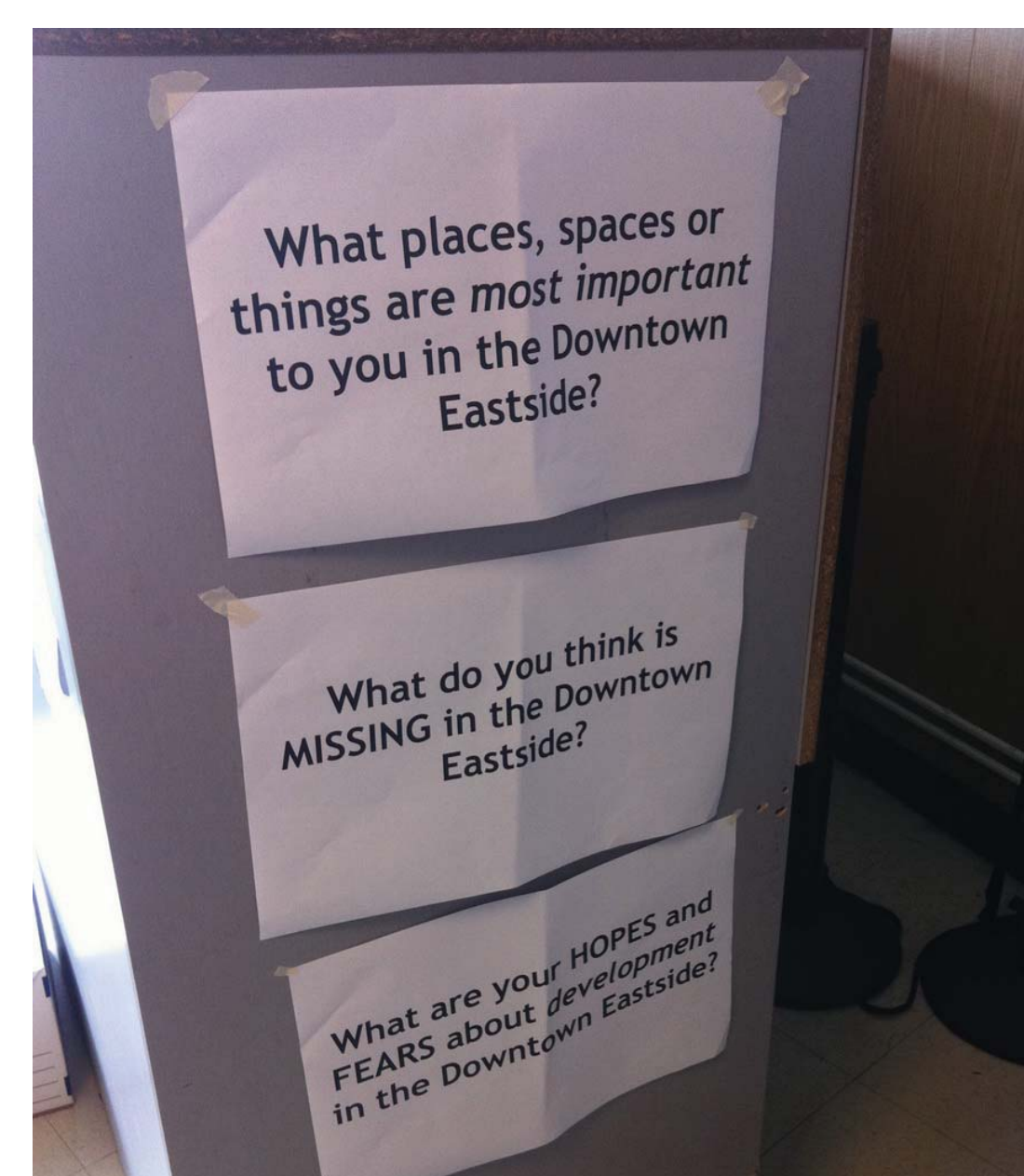
Development

- Development permits (new construction, change in use, building addition or exterior alteration) have fluctuated since 2000. There has been an increase since 2005.
- Total land value in both the Downtown Eastside and citywide has experienced a similar increase.
- Total improvement value (the estimated value of buildings or improvements to a site) in the Downtown Eastside did not increase as much as it has citywide .

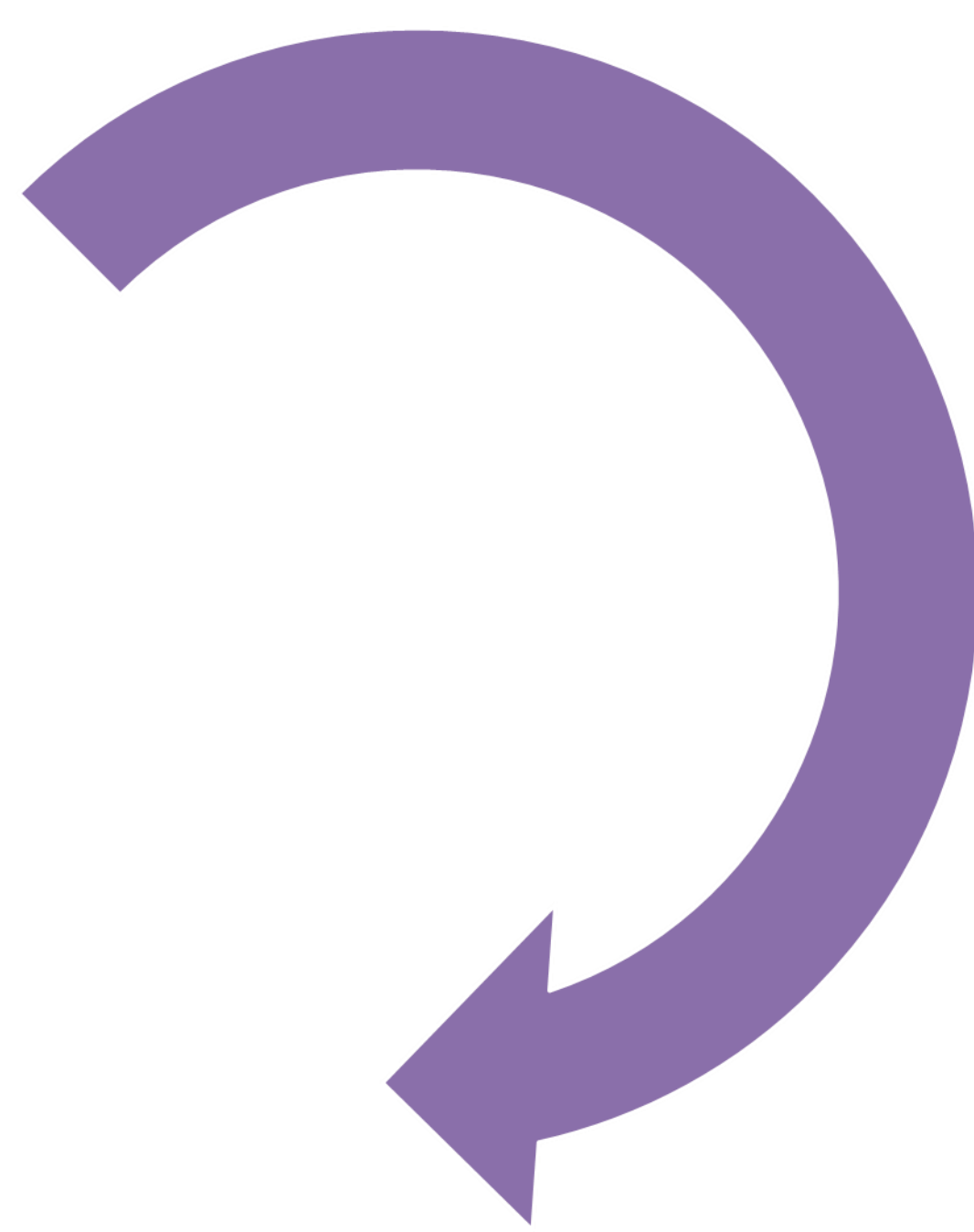


PHASE TWO: Engaging residents

Consultation (summer 2013) with 584 participants (ages 7 to 97) through 38 workshop sessions and 145 individual interviews

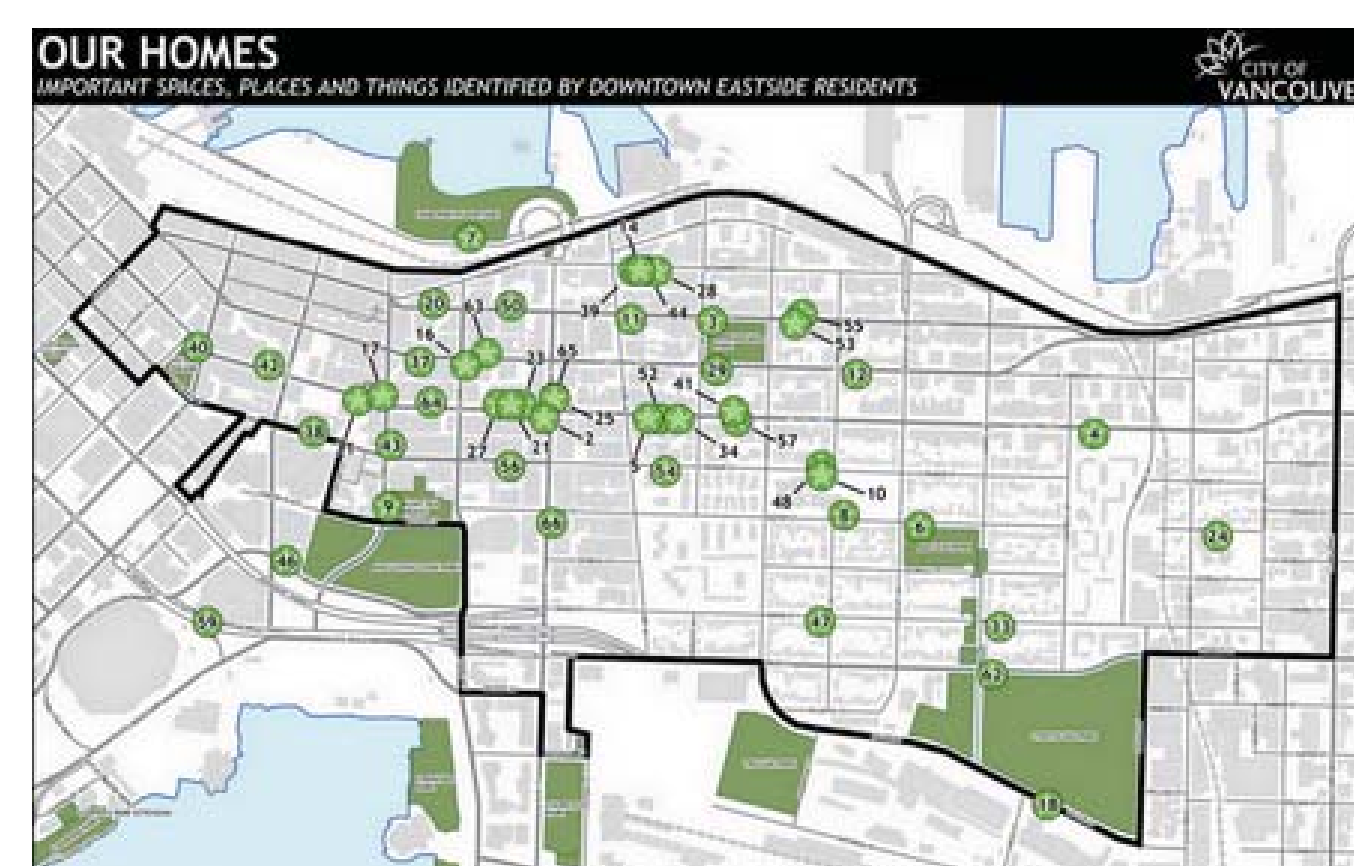


PHASE THREE: Community identified assets gaps, impact areas:



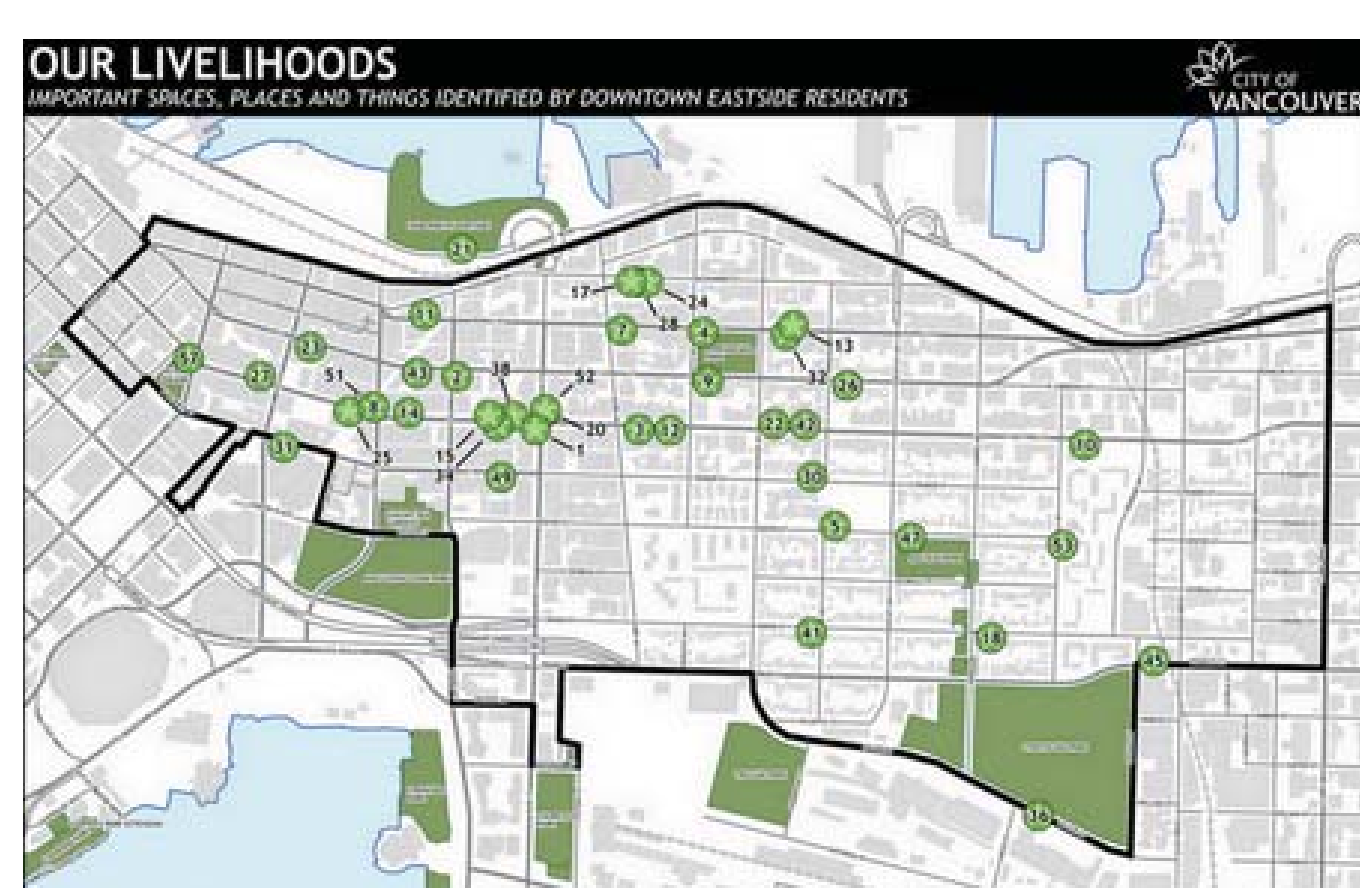
Our Homes:

- Affordable housing for people with low incomes
- Welfare-rate housing units
- Long-term security
- Rental Housing availability and affordability
- Adequacy, suitability, and safety of housing
- Range of housing types



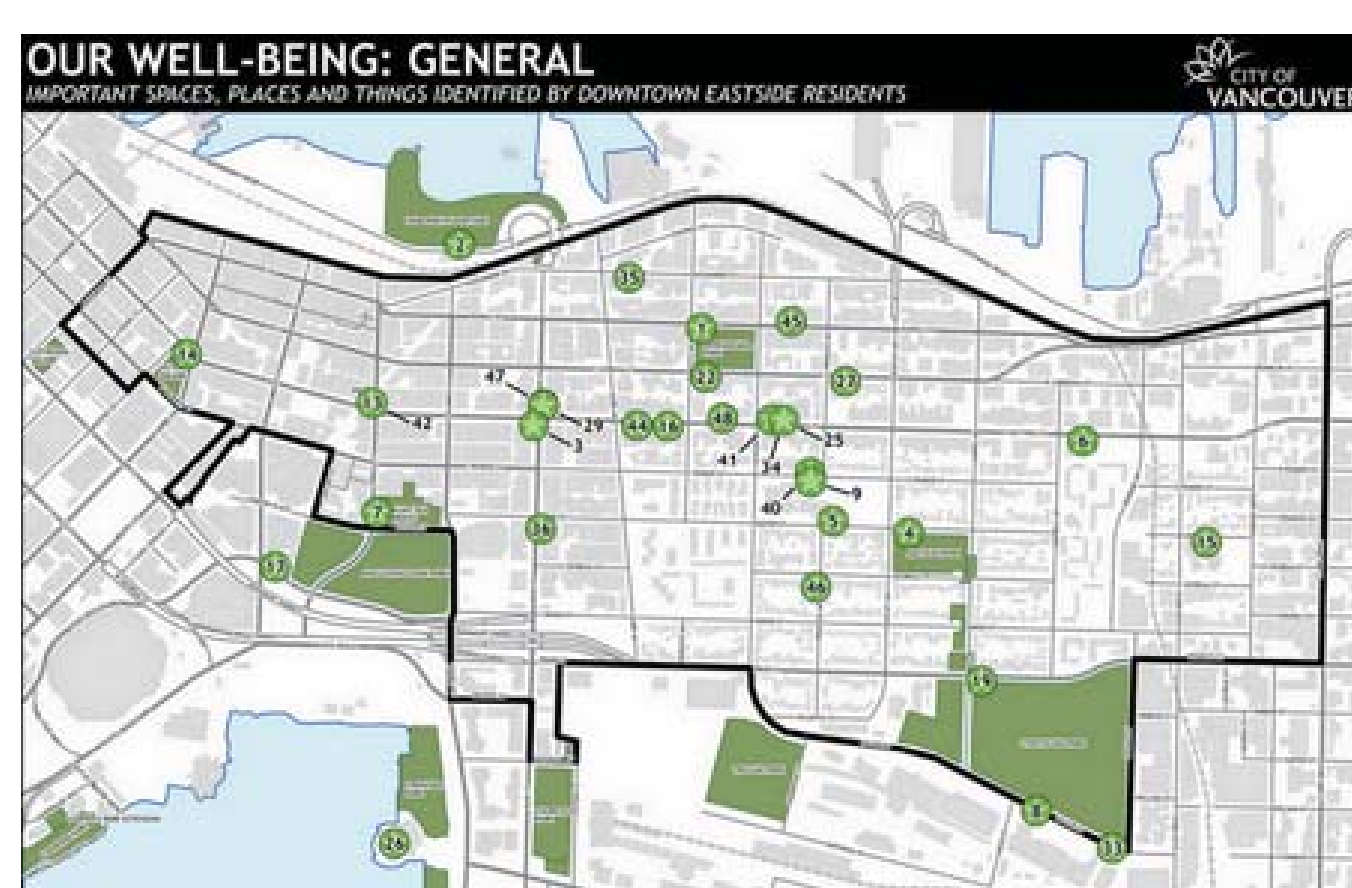
Our Livelihoods:

- Retail affordability and access
- Employment opportunities
- Local hiring options
- Low-income artist space
- Informal economies
- Income security / financial supports



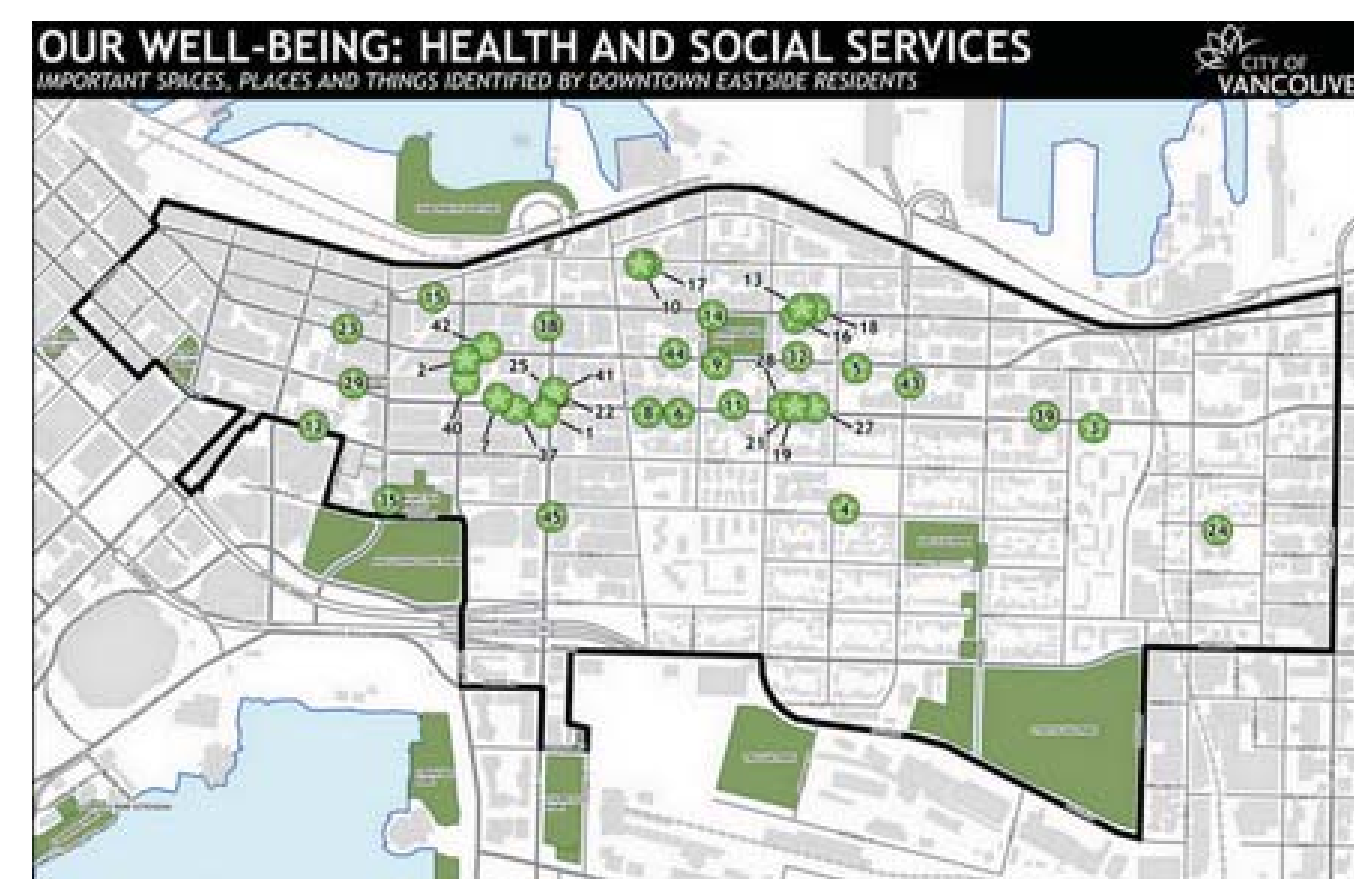
Our Well-Being: General - Education /learning

- Aboriginal culture education and learning
- Recreation and physical activity
- Childhood development, youth and families
- Access to the outdoors / green space



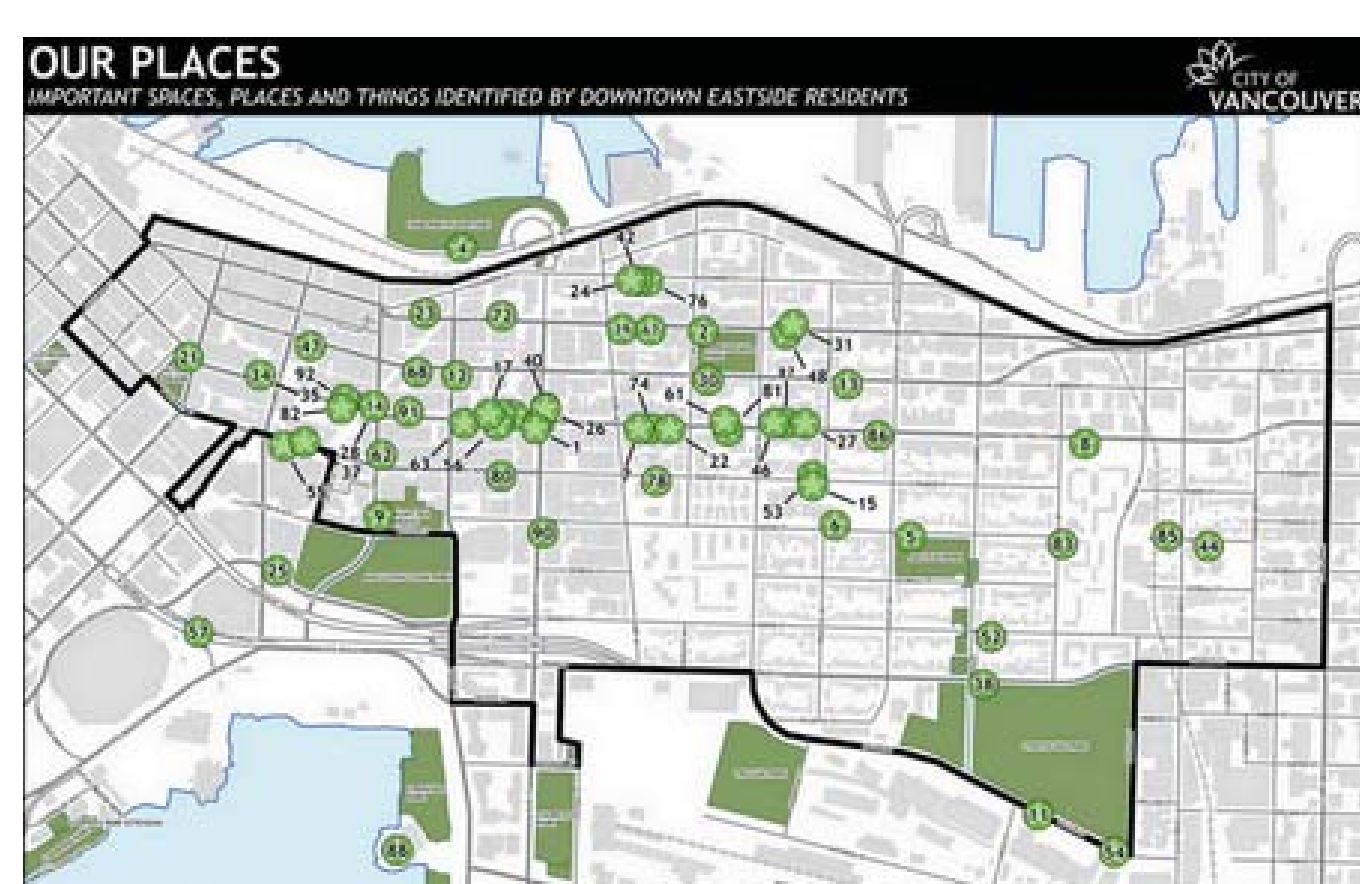
Our Well-Being: Health and Social Services

- Primary Healthcare
- Basic Needs Services/Supports
- Specialized Services/Supports
- Quality of Access to Supports
- Employment Services /Supports



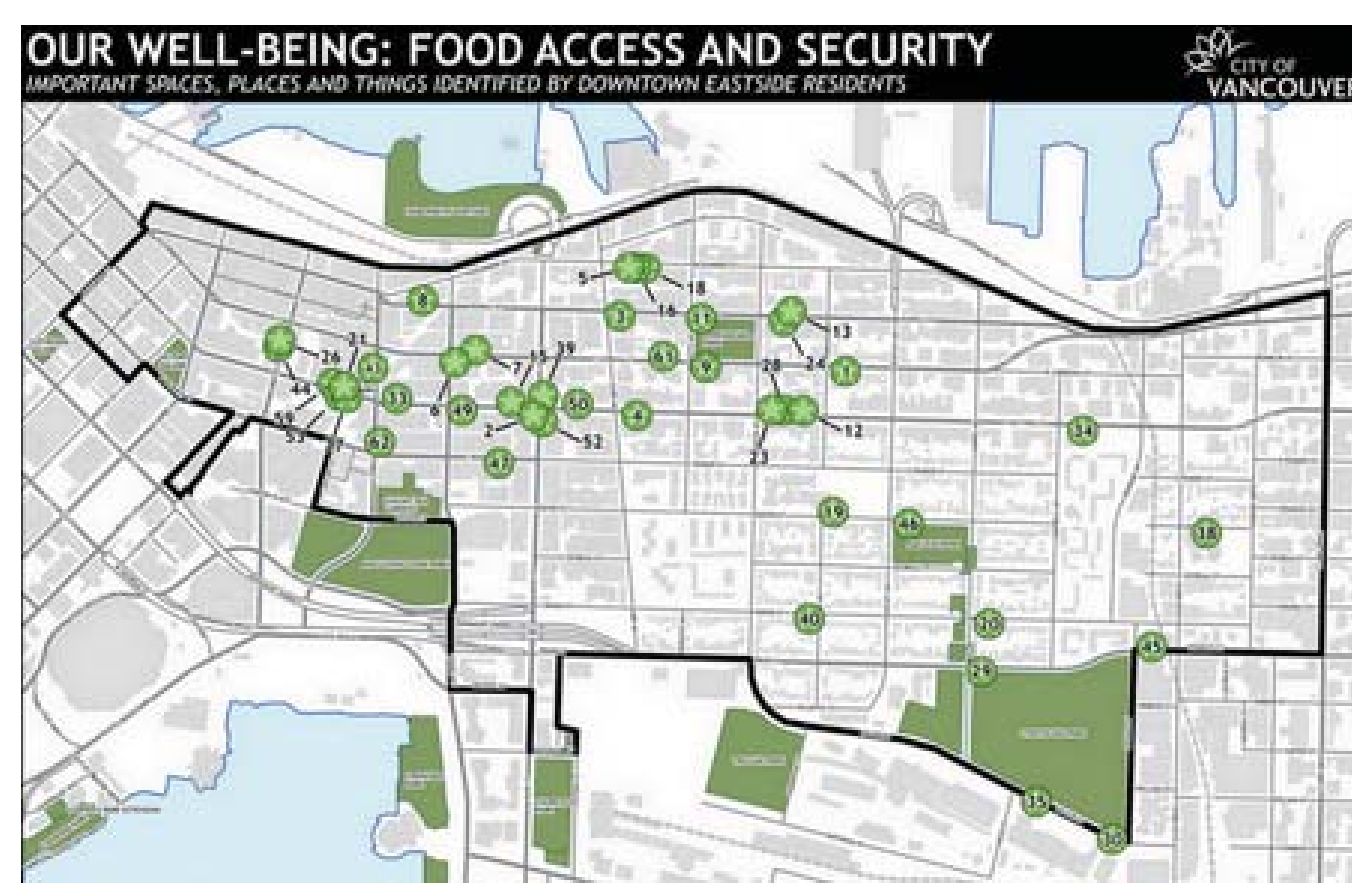
Our Places:

- Community fit/urban design/ scale
- Heritage/ Cultural conservation
- Public space/ interaction
- Beautification / green space
- Street furniture / infrastructure
- Transportation



Our Well-Being: Food Access and Security

- Low-cost food options
- Aboriginal foods
- High cost vs. low cost restaurants
- Food assets
- Nutritious / quality food
- Kitchen facilities



Our Well-Being: Inclusion, Belonging and Safety

- Sense of Community/Social Cohesion
- Discrimination and Exclusion
- Relationships Between Residents and Newcomers
- Safety
- Arts and Culture

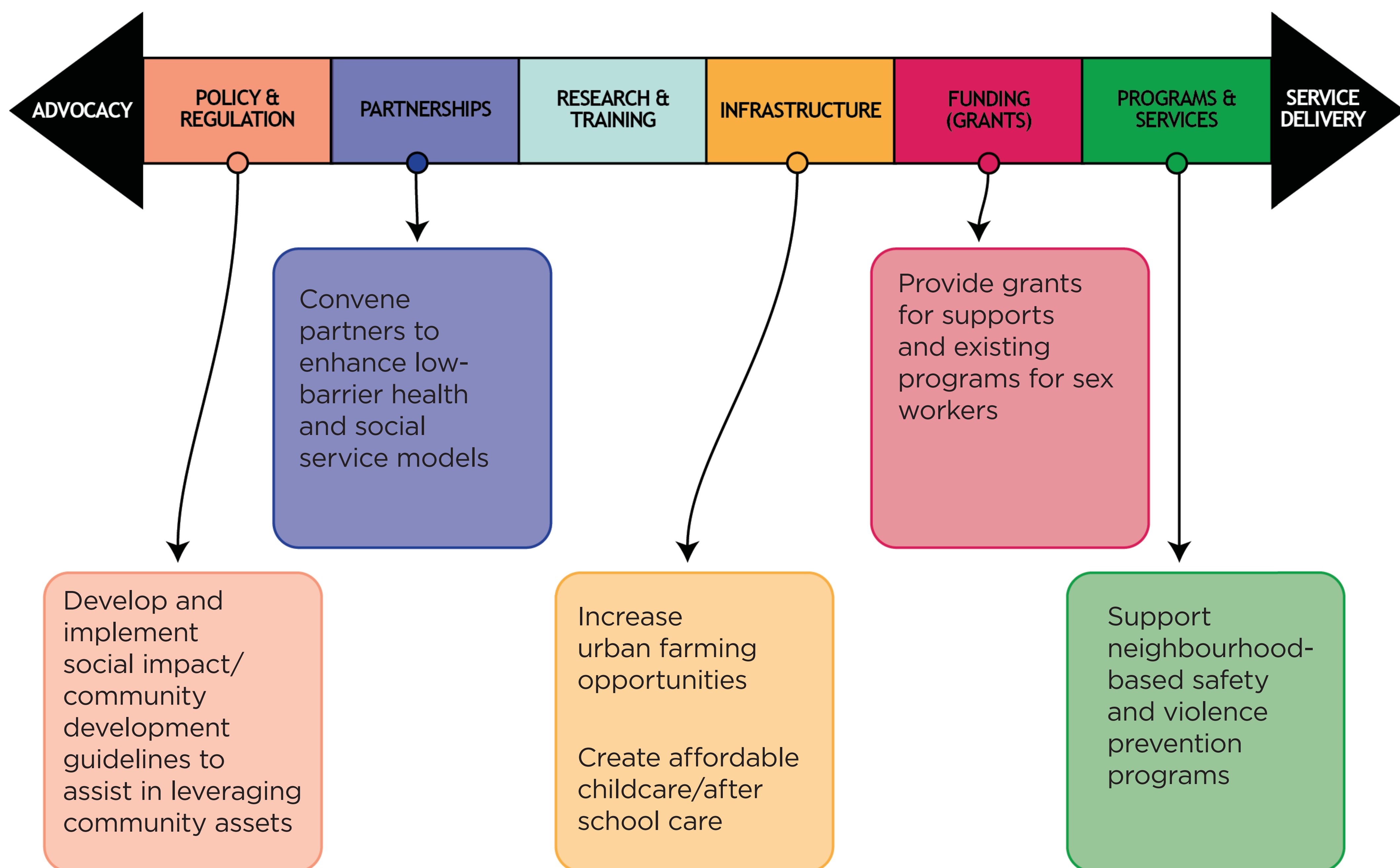




PHASE FOUR: Strategies, Interventions and Monitoring

Key mitigation strategies will be developed so that actions can be added into the DTES Community Plan. Going forward change will be monitored based on a set of indicators to identify positive and negative impacts.

Sample Tools and Strategies



Sources
 CoV Housing, 2013.
 Ministry of Social Development, 2013.
 Census of Population, 2001 and 2006.
 EDI-UBC HELP, 2011/12.
 BC Vital Statistics Agency (VISTA), October 2012.
 VPD, 2012.
 BCAA, 2011.
 Cost of Eating BC, 2011.
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