

Downtown Eastside Plan




Community Update #1 – July 2014



Welcome to the first community update for the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan. Through this email update, we strive to keep you informed about the progress on the Plan, upcoming events, and other important information. Additional information, such as background/resource information, can also be found on our [webpage](#).

DTES Plan, Policies, and Guidelines


The DTES Plan and related policies and guidelines, as adopted by City Council on March 15, 2014, are now available online at the following links:

- [Downtown Eastside Plan \(as adopted by City Council\)](#) 
- [Rezoning Policy for the Downtown Eastside](#) 
- [Micro Dwelling Policies and Guidelines](#) 
- [Policies and Guidelines for the Upgrade of Rooms Designated under the Single Room Accommodation \(SRA\) By-law 8733](#) 
- [Interim Liquor Policy for the Downtown Eastside](#) 

You can also find these under the *Documents* tab on our [DTES Plan webpage](#).

Chinese Society Building Grant Program

As one of the Quick Starts to implement the DTES Plan, staff are developing a matching grant program for Chinese Family Clan and Benevolent Societies in Chinatown. On July 8, 2014 Council heard a presentation, considered the staff report, and referred it to the Standing Committee meeting the following day to hear from speakers. After Council heard from speakers and read letters, it approved the recommended grant program and strategic support for the rehabilitation of the Chinatown Society heritage buildings. A consultancy will be undertaken as part of this work in partnership with the Chinatown Society Heritage Building Association. Further information on the matching grant application program and how to apply will be available in the fall.

- [Chinese Family Clan and Benevolent Societies in the Downtown Eastside: A New Grant Program and Strategic Support for Buildings with Heritage, Affordable Housing or Cultural Assets](#) 
- Find the July 9 Standing Committee meeting [details, videos, and minutes](#).

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotel Strategy

Improving conditions for SRO tenants is a key housing goal of the DTES Plan. The Chief Housing Officer now has the ability to approve Single Room Accommodation By-law permits for upgrades to non-market SROs and these upgrades can be further supported through \$5,000 per door grants to non-profit operators. Staff are also in the process of developing the call for proposals for the \$40,000 grant to a non-profit with expertise in mediating landlord/tenant conflict and assisting through the Residential Tenancy Branch arbitration process. It is anticipated that the call for proposals will go out in late summer with a recommendation to Council on the successful applicant in early fall. If your organization would like to be added to the notification list when the call for proposals is issued, please email celine.mauboules@vancouver.ca.

Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions

The Task Force has been meeting since December and includes several members from the former DTES LAPP committee (community agencies and low-income caucus) as well as people with lived experience, government, health authorities, community agencies, the Vancouver Police Department and academic leaders. Examples of a few of the actions specifically focused on the DTES include:

- Engaging partners in discussions for an Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Centre as part of a Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Wellness Strategy;
- Creation of a community 'Dialogues' project to raise awareness of poverty and stigma;
- Piloting transformative education sessions with BIAs as part of Good Neighbour Program;
- Enhancing peer navigator roles for people pre/post crisis; and
- Enhancing youth engagement and range of services in partnership with Inner City Youth, Ray-Cam Co-operative Centre, Watari, and other key partners.

A report including a full summary of key principles and actions to guide the next phase of work will be delivered to Council in July (available on the website prior to the Council date). If you would like more information on this work, please contact Mary Clare Zak (maryclare.zak@vancouver.ca) or Dianna Hurford (dianna.hurford@vancouver.ca).

Community-based Monitoring

In response to Council direction, we are currently researching community-based monitoring models to learn more about best practices from other cities. This will help develop and shape how we monitor the pace and impact of neighbourhood change in the DTES.

Joint Business Improvement Association Survey

Ongoing engagement with local businesses is key to many of the local economy actions in the DTES Plan, and is important to shape and support the economic health and future of our communities. Working in collaboration with the Chinatown, Hastings Crossing, and Strathcona Business Improvement Associations, a neighbourhood-wide joint-BIA survey of businesses is currently underway. This survey will help further our understanding of the characteristics of the local businesses that make up our neighbourhood and help to identify linkages and opportunities for partnership, local procurement, business-to-business networking, and much more.

Community Economic Development Strategy

In response to the Council mandate, work has begun on developing a Community Economic Development strategy to complement the Local Economy chapter of the DTES Plan. Earlier this spring the City of Vancouver, in partnership with Simon Fraser University and Hastings Crossing Business Improvement Association, held a series of six strategic sessions to explore the various components and approaches of Community Economic Development strategies. This learning opportunity has provided a strong foundation and good direction for the CED strategy going forward. This summer, we will begin targeted outreach with a range of stakeholders and the broader public to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be involved and share their input.

DTES Street Market and Street Vending

We have begun work on finding a more permanent location for the DTES Street Market for safer survival vending, and opportunities for sale of locally-produced arts and crafts, which is one of the quick-start actions concerning survival vending in the DTES.

Development and Rezoning Update

Since the approval of the DTES Plan, several rezoning and major development applications for new construction have been received and are proceeding in accordance with the Plan. See the links below for details of these proposals:

Rezoning Applications

- [450 Gore Avenue \(PDF\)](#)

Development Applications

- [55 Expo Boulevard - International Village Elementary School \(PDF\)](#)
- [720 East Hastings Street – Strathcona Library and Social Housing \(PDF\)](#)
- 41 East Hastings Street – information not yet available. Please check our [Development Application webpage](#) for updates.
- 308 West Hastings Street – information not yet available. Please check our [Development Application webpage](#) for updates.

You can find information on these and other applications on our [Development Application](#) and [Rezoning Application](#) webpages.

Public Realm Improvements

Street amenities contribute to vibrant, attractive streetscapes and public spaces in the DTES, and encourage walking, cycling, and social connectedness. We are exploring various public realm improvements, such as new benches, bicycle parking, and neighbourhood bulletin boards, in collaboration with the Business Improvement Associations and resident groups.

Vancouver Heritage Register

The Heritage Action Plan is now underway, which includes updating the Vancouver Heritage Register. The Vancouver Heritage Register is the cornerstone of the City's heritage program. It provides a complete inventory of sites in Vancouver that have historical, cultural, aesthetic, scientific, or educational worth. To learn more about protecting Vancouver's heritage, visit our [Heritage Conservation webpage](#).

Contact us about the DTES Plan

For more information on the Downtown Eastside Plan, contact us at:

✉ dtesplan@vancouver.ca

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