

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE PLAN

Year One Update: Community Newsletter #3
(March 2014 - March 2015)



DTES PLAN

The DTES Plan was approved by City Council in March 2014, along with a Rezoning Policy and Interim Liquor Policy.

Providing a clear and flexible framework to guide change and development in the DTES over the next 30 years, the Plan also sets up priorities for implementation of Quick Start projects within the first five years.

To read the plan, visit our website at vancouver.ca/dtes

IMPLEMENTATION

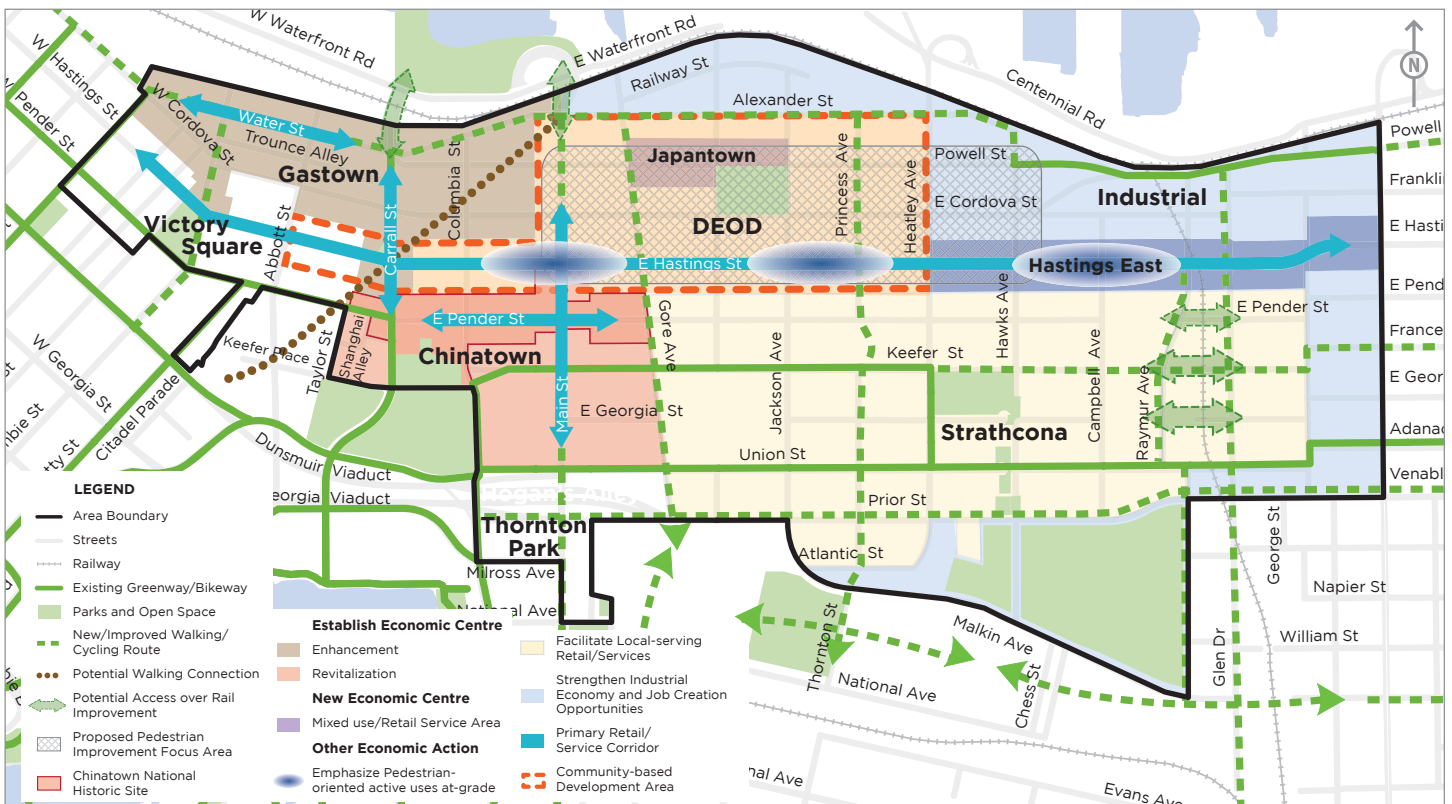
Implementing the plan involves partnerships and collaboration between residents, societies, funders and businesses.

A tremendous spirit of social collaboration has emerged after the planning process, with many people working together to achieve common goals.

This community newsletter is a summary to monitor how implementation is progressing one year after approval of the plan.

DTES VISION

"... a neighbourhood of communities providing sustainable, safe and healthy places for everyone to live and work. These communities will continue to value and cherish unique characteristics, including diversity, economic mix, culture and heritage. The neighbourhood will be made up of mixed-income communities with a range of affordable housing options (including social housing) for all residents, local serving commerce, social services and cultural activities where all feel welcome, valued and at home."



Downtown Eastside Potential Development and Opportunities Policy Directions Map



OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

	IMPROVED WELL-BEING FOR ALL
	HEALTHY HOMES FOR ALL
	VIBRANT INCLUSIVE LOCAL ECONOMY
	IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE AND SAFETY
	ARTS & CULTURE OPPORTUNITIES
	CELEBRATION OF HERITAGE
	IMPROVED SAFE & ACCESSIBLE PARKS OPEN SPACE
	COMMUNITY PLACE-MAKING
	WELL-MANAGED GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

ONE YEAR UPDATE

Improved Well-being for All

Priorities

In the first year, the main focus areas have been to: work on mental health and addictions challenges in the communities; establish partnerships and explore the concept of an Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Centre; protect community assets; and profile the need for more childcare spaces as change takes place.

Achievements

The Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions is an action-based forum of key leaders including people with lived experience. In September 2014, the Task Force released the report *Caring for All: Priority Actions to Address Mental Health and Addictions*. The 23 actions in this report seek to make our system of care more responsive. Under the Task Force, the City has contributed \$80,000 to support integration of services (youth transitioning out of care, and mental health and addiction services) and \$175,000 towards two Aboriginal Healing and Wellness clinics.

Additional school-aged care and multi-purpose expansion space has been achieved and \$1.5 million in social policy grants (for 39 organizations) have been provided in the neighbourhood. A survey of social service providers was conducted to assess community needs for affordable space or expanded facilities. The VCC Community Kitchen and Food Hub was established with the help of \$100,000 from a DTES Capital Grant. United We Can received \$200,000 in DTES Capital Grants and \$150,000 from the Great Beginnings

fund to support tenant improvements and relocation.

Going forward: Year 2 Focus

Phase 2 of the Mayor's Task Force on Mental Health and Addictions began in January. Six working groups will continue to focus on the priority areas, with a strengthened emphasis on people with lived experience and gender. An Aboriginal cultural mapping project is underway to help develop an Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Centre in the neighbourhood, and determine where the opportunities are to deliver this urgently needed initiative. Community asset retention and childcare needs will be linked to new housing opportunities where possible.

Healthy Homes for All

Priorities

Work has continued to target opportunities for 850 new social housing units within the first few years of the Plan's adoption. We are also seeking additional opportunities in the DTES and other neighbourhoods for future housing development. Support to non-profit operators to improve the living conditions of residents remains a priority. A further priority has been to pursue more rent subsidies through the provincial government.

Achievements

To date, 664 new social housing units have been achieved since the Plan was approved, which received \$20.1 million in social housing contributions from the City. Properties have been assessed and acquired for housing (for example, 501 Powell) and non-profit operators have received \$190,000 in SRO upgrade grants. For the first time, a new secured market rental project was approved in Strathcona.



Going forward: Year 2 Focus

Work has started on an advocacy strategy to leverage funding and essential legislative changes from senior levels of government. Ongoing housing development will also be undertaken on several priority sites by the Vancouver Affordable Housing Authority.

Vibrant & Inclusive Local Economy

Priorities

The highest priorities included: initiating a Community Economic Development (CED) Strategy process; building the capacity of the DTES Street Market Society; acquiring a permanent site for the market; exploring ways to protect valuable industrial lands; and implementing the Chinatown Economic Revitalization strategy.

Achievements

Several meaningful community-led dialogues to develop emerging directions for the CED strategy were held, including six workshops hosted by SFU. Community economic job creation projects and community asset upgrades were supported with \$857,000 in DTES Capital Matching Grants.

The City purchased a site for the DTES Street Market. It will also be for a CED hub and social housing in the future. To improve the Sunday street market operations and security, \$30,000 in social policy grants and \$40,000 Great Beginnings grants were provided. A further \$20,000 in DTES Capital Grants supported vending carts and a maker space tent shelter.

Work began to explore ways to accommodate new age technology industrial uses in Railtown.

Going forward: Year 2 Focus

Work will continue on the CED Strategy and the relocation of the DTES Street Market to the future CED Hub. An outreach program to engage and support vulnerable people in informal street vending will continue. The Railtown study will explore emerging ideas and discuss them with residents and industrialist.

Improved Transportation

Priorities

The transportation priorities are to make walking safe, convenient and delightful, and ensure streets and sidewalks encourage walking, healthy lifestyles and social connectedness.

Achievements

Eight pedestrian ramps have been constructed in the DTES, resulting in a full set of ramps at the following intersections:

- Jackson and East Georgia
- Jackson and lane south of Union
- Jackson and lane south of East Georgia

Going forward: Year 2 Focus

A pedestrian- and cyclist-activated traffic signal will be installed at the Jackson and Powell intersection. A study is underway on the pedestrian crossing at Frances and Clark. Planning for rehabilitation of Water Street and Maple Tree Square will start later this year.

Arts & Culture Opportunities

Priorities

The first year has focussed on continued support for DTES arts and cultural groups through space and grant allocations.

Achievements

Four DTES arts and cultural groups have been approved as tenants in Woodward's cultural amenity space. Another seven DTES arts and cultural organizations were awarded DTES Capital Grants totalling almost \$232,000 for building modifications and equipment. Seven DTES arts and cultural groups were approved for Cultural Infrastructure Grants and 11 DTES arts and cultural groups were approved for grants through a new annual assistance program. For the first-time a trilingual (English, Cantonese, Mandarin) grants information session was held at the Chinese Cultural Centre. Grants of \$21,000 for the Aboriginal Showcase and Art Market in the Woodward's Atrium and \$15,000 for the Nighthawk Aboriginal Arts Festival were distributed.

Celebrate Heritage

Priorities

The focus was to support community efforts to recognize and commemorate heritage and conserve heritage assets.

Achievements

The Chinese Society Buildings Matching Grants program was launched to assist critical upgrades for these important cultural and heritage assets. The program was funded through \$1.25 million in DTES Capital Grants and \$1.2 million in Community Amenity Contributions. The Chinatown Society Legacy Project is developing a long-term rehabilitation plan for 12 heritage society buildings (\$400,000 in DTES Capital was allocated). A community initiative to investigate the feasibility of revitalizing Powell Street was assisted with DTES Capital funding and work started on the Vancouver Heritage Action Plan for the city.

Going forward: Year 2 Focus

Chinese Society Buildings critical upgrades will be implemented and a funding request will be taken to senior government for heritage building upgrades to conserve Chinatown character buildings. Other ongoing work involves supporting the Powell Street Festival Society revitalization feasibility study and participating in the survey of Aboriginal cultural heritage assets.

Parks & Open Space

Priorities

The Plan identified converting over-paved or under-used areas into mini-parks or plazas as a priority action.

Achievements

Work has focused on investigating possible unused spaces for conversion to mini-parks/parklets to improve the quality of public realm, particularly where there is inadequate access to parks.

Going forward: Year 2 Focus

Work will continue on establishing a pilot mini-park/parklets in the area. We are also looking at installing community bulletin boards in parks and public spaces.

Community Place-making

Priorities

the first year priorities included working with the community to prepare a Hastings Street and Kiwassa Urban Design Framework and to encouraging the revitalization of laneways.

Achievements

Work began on the Hastings Street and Kiwassa Urban Design Guidelines, and DTES Capital funding (\$32,000) was provided to support an initiative by the Strathcona BIA to start a community dialogue on revitalizing Hastings Street.

Going forward: Year 2 Focus

We'll continue to support the Strathcona initiative. City workshops will be held to develop the Hastings Street and Kiwassa Urban Design Guidelines to encourage local neighbourhood shopping character and amenity space as change occurs.

Well-managed Built Form

Priorities

The priorities included: implementing the Social Impact Management Framework to protect and enhance community assets; managing change to provide benefits and opportunities for local residents; and amending land use and development policies and by-laws to support plan implementation.

Achievements

The Rezoning Policy, By-laws and Official Development Plan amendments required to implement the DTES Plan were enacted in April 2014. Community workshops were held with Chinatown to discuss concerns about the change in Chinatown's character.

Community workshops were held with Chinatown, Strathcona and Oppenheimer representatives to design the proposed Neighbourhood Fit evaluation pilot. Social innovation funding was provided to support the Hastings Crossing BIA CommunityWise business initiative.

Going forward: Year 2 Focus

Work will focus on testing the Neighbourhood Fit pilot in the Community-based Development Area to encourage better alignment with social impact objectives and protection of community assets. Community dialogues will be arranged and policy adjustments explored to better manage change in Chinatown.

CONTACT US:

Tell us how we can work together to achieve better outcomes.

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