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Subject: Update: By-Law Amendment for public drinking at 111 Princess Parklet

Dear Mayor and Council:

Staff are providing an update with background information and context in advance of a Council Report (RTS 14272) scheduled for February 24, 2021. This report is regarding a By-law amendment to allow public consumption of alcohol at a temporary parklet ('Parklet') in front of the Drinker's Lounge at 111 Princess Ave, and requests additional funding through the 2021 Social Policy Grants Operating budget for the initiative.

Staff from Social Policy, Engineering, and PDS led the development of the Council Report, with input from Legal, VPD, Finance, as well as VCH and PHS Community Services Society.

A summary of the issue and the work to date is as follows:

Background:

- People who drink alcohol during the day at the bus stop in front of the Astoria on the 700 block of East Hastings are at risk for harms due to a lack of safe places to drink. Harms include falls and hitting head/brain injury, stumbling into or being hit by traffic, targeted harassment, stigma, and risk of overdose and/or exposure to harsh weather.
- In Spring/Summer 2020, local businesses raised several issues to staff and to Mayor and Council regarding drinkers at the bus stop, and advocated to remove the bus stop. Staff immediately assessed these complaints and concluded that removing the bus stop as a stand-alone response would result in more harms to drinkers due to displacement, and would not resolve issues as intended for businesses.
- In July/August 2020, staff convened a Steering Committee with the Strathcona BIA, PHS Drinker.s Lounge, VANDU s Illicit Drinkers Group (aka EIDGE), VCH, FNHA, DTES Neighbourhood House and drinkers to discuss options for a safe place for drinkers during the day.
- In January 2021, staff worked with PHS Community Services Society to develop an operations plan and budget for extending hours and location for the CMAP program until July 31, 2021.

Status Update:

- Staff are recommending that Council:
 - Approve a By-law amendment to allow safe and legal consumption of alcohol at the 111 Princess temporary parklet within the City s road right-of-way until July 31, 2021 (with-potential for extension pending additional operation funding); and
 - Approve a Social Policy grant of \$25,000 to PHS to support operations of the Parklet to extend operations until July 31, 2021. Staff will work with partners to implement a

fundraising strategy to raise additional funds from other levels of government and private partners.

Additional Details:

- The City provided \$5,000 for engagement, including a focus group with drinkers at VANDU and ongoing outreach to drinkers at the Astoria bus stop by PHS staff.
- In October 2020, Council approved a \$50K grant to PHS Community Services Society to provide stewardship over a proposed temporary parklet to allow for expanded hours and space for the Drinker's Lounge Community Managed Alcohol Program (CMAP). A By-law amendment is needed to activate this space for alcohol consumption as part of this program, as it is located in the City road right-of-way.
- The By-law No. 8735 amendment would designate this public place where liquor may be legally consumed, limited by dates and times. This amendment follows the temporary pilot approach Council approved in July 2020.
- Staff will report back, separate from this upcoming Council report, with a full update and potential next steps on the overall public alcohol consumption pilot from the summer of 2020.

Pending Council's Approval, Next Steps:

- Engineering will complete installation of the Parklet at 111 Princess.
- Staff will work with partners to seek additional funding to extend operations until end of December 2021.
- If funding secured past July 31, 2021, staff will return to Council to seek an extension of this By-law amendment.

Should you have additional questions or concerns, please contact Sandra Singh, General Manager, ACCS at sandra.singh@vancouver.ca or Lon LaClaire, General Manager, Engineering lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməŋəm (Musqueam), lóóvú 7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.