

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 6/29/2023 9:47:06 PM
Subject: Update - DTES market/street vending

Good evening Mayor and Council,

Please find below an update on the temporary closure of the DTES Market and related work.

Background

- The unit block of East Hastings Street has long been the focal point for street vending in Vancouver.
- Just over 10 years ago, the City initiated the DTES Market program (.the market) to provide an off-sidewalk site for outdoor vending to relieve the pressure on the sidewalks.
- The market has moved numerous times over the years due to the temporary nature of available sites.
- The market operations are contracted to a non-profit organization, currently The Binners' Project.
- Staff and the market operator liaise with VPD regularly as to the operations of the market in recognition of its complexity.
- Procedural and program changes have been implemented over the years in response to various circumstances and challenges.
- VPD estimates that the majority of vending in the market itself are legitimate goods with some illicit items passing through the market.

Recent Context

- On June 12, following a violent assault on vendors in the market by members of a gang, the Binners' Project decided to temporarily close the market.
- In the subsequent days, market vendors started to establish their stalls on the sidewalk outside of the market (south-side of the East Hastings Street unit block), mixing in with the other sidewalk vendors.
- The south-side of the unit block of East Hastings St has been heavily congested with vending for the last months and this has intensified with the closure of the market.

Update: Short-Term

- The market will re-open tomorrow, Friday, June 30. The Binners' Project will be implementing the following operational changes to ensure the safety of their peers, vendors, and customers:
 - Addition of private security services to enable two guards on site at all times;
 - Bag checks of all vendors and randomized checks of under-table vendor storage containers; and
 - Controlled entry to the market with bag checks of all visitors/customers.
- In the coming days, Engineering Services will enforce the Street and Traffic By-law along the south side of East Hastings to ensure that sidewalks remain passable for passers-by and to reduce congestion in order to create safer access for pedestrians, wheelchairs, etc. Notice will be provided to community organizations and vendors to ensure awareness of the intention.
- Engineering Services (and ACCS staff) will observe other areas of the DTES to ensure that sidewalks remain passable for passers-by and to reduce congestion in order to create safer access for pedestrians, wheelchairs, etc.
- As a related effort, The Downtown Eastside Women s Centre (DEWC) has traditionally operated a summer women s market on Columbia St between E Hastings and the lane just north of Pender Street. ACCS staff are exploring other off-street options for the DEWC summer market.

Longer-term

- In recognition that the market will close permanently at the end of August, ACCS staff are also considering and will connect with community organizations to discuss other options to relieve the pressure of legitimate street vending on sidewalks in the DTES. Staff will consult with VPD and other City Departments as appropriate.

Staff will keep Council updated as to the status of work to determine alternatives to the market. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please email Sandra Singh at Sandra.singh@vancouver.ca.

Best,

Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Snw̓x̓w̓ú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.