

From: **"Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>**
To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**
Date: 11/7/2023 4:47:03 PM
Subject: Council Memo - Gastown Summer Pilot Update - RTS 15793
Attachments: Council Memo - Gastown Summer Pilot Update - RTS 15793.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- This memo provides an update on the approach, planning and upcoming milestones for the summer 2024 pedestrian pilot in Gastown
- An initial approach to the pilot timing, street design and toolkit is outlined, as well as the estimated budget.
- Discussions are underway with Gastown Business Improvement Society, local businesses, residents and other community organizations and will continue as the plans for the pilot are refined.
- By the end of 2023, staff will advance the procurement of furniture and supportive signal upgrades.
- A report with more information on the Gastown Public Space Plan and the summer 2024 pilot will be brought to Council in early 2024.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver
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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

November 6, 2023

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Interim Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Gastown Summer Pilot Update

RTS #: 15793

This memo provides an update on the Summer 2024 pedestrian pilot on Water Street, a key part of the *Gastown Public Spaces Plan* which is now underway in response to the [Council Motion](#), "A People-Focused Gastown: A Bold, Forward-Looking Vision for a Vibrant and Prosperous Neighbourhood" approved by Council on May 10, 2023.

Background

Council directed staff to undertake a pilot to test a car-free Water Street, with the ultimate goal of creating "a more vibrant, people-friendly destination [...and] enabling of ongoing activations including patios, music, events, festivals and active transportation opportunities". The Summer 2024 pilot is an opportunity to test and learn about what is needed to support a pedestrianized Water Street, and will be a key input into the *Gastown Public Space Plan*.

Planning and Proposed Approach

Staff have begun work with Gastown Business Improvement Society (GBIS) and other community partners to plan the Summer 2024 pilot. Following construction to repair pavers in the roadway of Maple Tree Square for approximately 10-12 weeks in April to June, the pedestrian pilot is expected to run through July and August.

The proposed street design concept for the pilot (see Appendix A), takes into consideration both existing places of significant public life and the constraints of the current transportation network:

- Water Street from the entrance at Richards Street to the steam clock at Cambie Street would be car-free, as will Maple Tree Square;
- Between these car-free plazas, the two blocks of Water Street would be car-light and pedestrian-focused, while maintaining local access for residents, businesses, and the parkade;
- For events or on weekends there would be an opportunity to make Water Street car-free;
- Key traffic signal changes would support re-routing of vehicle traffic. However, due to the significant signal and intersection changes required to make Cordova Street two-way, Cordova Street would remain one-way for the Summer 2024 pilot.

Discussions about loading, delivery and access will continue over the coming months with the GBIS, individual businesses, property owners, property managers, and tour bus operators in order to refine the proposed street design concept and help support a successful pilot.

Staff will also be in discussion with individual businesses, the GBIS, community organizations and event organizers, about how to program and activate both the car-free and car-light blocks of Water Street and Maple Tree Square. This includes:

- The development of a street layout – with seating, tables, planters and other engaging features – that is sensitive to the local context, creates a welcoming and inviting experience, and supports a balance of passive and active uses;
- Support for businesses, buskers and vendors to activate the street and sidewalks;
- Coordination with local community organizations and event organizers to ensure the street can support a range of activations and can help encourage people to linger, socialize and learn about Gastown.

The above will integrate into the development of an enhanced stewardship and management plan that will support the daily care and cleanliness of the street during the pilot.

Finally, staff will develop a monitoring, engagement and data collection plan to learn about the pilot's successes and improvements for future pilots, contributing to the final *Gastown Public Spaces Plan*. This would include how the broader street network, including Cordova Street, supports the pedestrianization of Water Street.

At this time, staff expect the total cost of the Summer 2024 pilot to be in the range of \$750,000-\$900,000, funded from the current Gastown Capital budget. This includes signal and traffic management improvements, furniture and planters, an enhanced stewardship and management approach, and monitoring and data collection.

Next steps

The planning work for the pilot will continue over the next few months. In December, initial furniture orders and traffic signal changes for the summer pilot will be advanced (see Appendix B). Staff plan to provide Council with a more fulsome update on the summer pilot and the Gastown Public Space Plan in a Council report in early 2024.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions about these initiatives.



Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services

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Appendix A: Proposed layout for Summer 2024 pilot

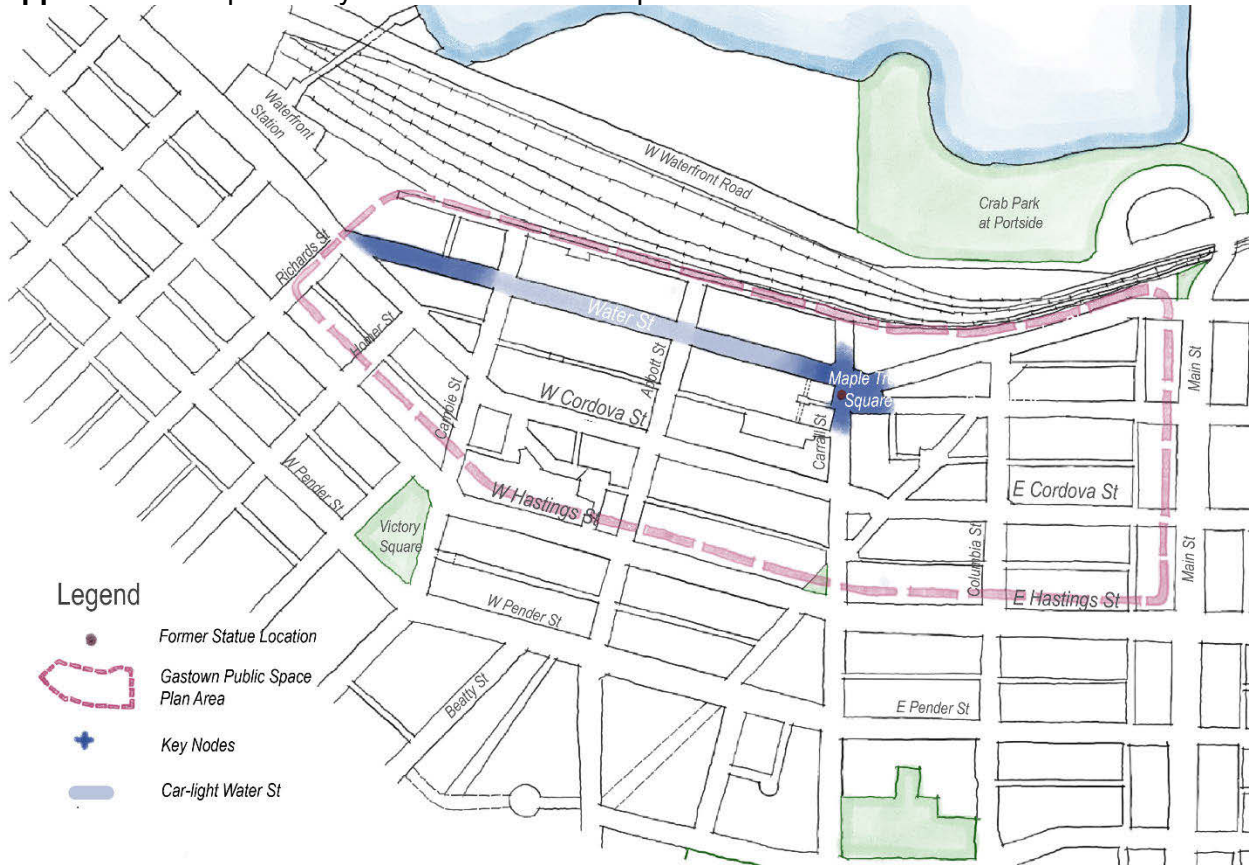


Figure 1: Baseline approach with two car-free nodes (Richards to Cambie and Maple Tree Square) and a car-light area in-between (Cambie St to Maple Tree Square), which can become car-free during select event days.

Furniture

Modular/flexible furniture examples



Bistro set examples



Lounge chair examples



APPENDIX B: Upcoming milestones for the Summer 2024 pilot

Preliminary Planning (October to December 2023):

- Learn and assess business and resident access, loading and street use needs
- Refine street design concept
- Develop layout plan and order baseline furniture and features
- Define core levels of service for a management and stewardship

Detailed Planning (January to March 2024):

- Continue to support patio permitting and merchandise display process
- Develop programming and activation plan in collaboration with GBIS, community organizations and event organizers
- Develop a stewardship approach with interested stakeholders and organizations
- Order additional furniture or design elements as needed
- Implement signal changes

Finalization (April to June 2024):

- Coordinate as needed with construction in Maple Tree Square
- Finalize programming and activation plan and calendar of events in collaboration with GBIS, community organizations and event organizers
- Finalize a stewardship agreement with involved stakeholders and organizations

Summer Pilot (July to August 2024)

- Implement and publicly launch pilot
- Monitor and collect data
- Make adjustments to design or approach as needed
- Launch Phase 2 engagement on Gastown Public Spaces Plan