

From: **"Mochrie, Paul"**

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 2024-07-03 12:49:49 PM

Subject: Upcoming news release: Water Street Pedestrian Zone (July 4, 2024)

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Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below news release on Thursday, July 4, 2024 to mark official launch of the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot. The news release will be issued as part of the media event alongside the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh nations. Please keep this news release embargoed until it goes live from the City media email account at 10 am. We hope to see you on Water Street tomorrow for the media event.

Maria will reply to this email with the relevant Vancouver.ca link and social media links, once these are live. We will continue a strong social push through the summer during the pilot and alongside our partners.

Best,  
Paul

**Paul Mochrie** (he/him)  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

**City of Vancouver**  
**News release**  
**July 4, 2024**

## **City celebrates the official opening of the Water Street Pedestrian Zone alongside Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation)**

Today in Gastown, the City of Vancouver with members and staff of Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) gathered to celebrate the official opening of the **Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot**.

**DRAFT** "I am thrilled to celebrate the launch of the Pedestrian Zone and am pleased to share that we have been working closely with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations to establish their visibility here in Gastown as part of the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot, and more permanently through the Gastown Public Spaces Plan," says Mayor Ken Sim. "This is deeply important work and aligns with our recent approval of the UNDRIP Action Plan and this Council's efforts to create vibrant public spaces." [DRAFT]

In recent times, Gastown's streets and public spaces have not reflected the histories and culture of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations despite Gastown being a place of importance in their past, present and future.

As part of the Gastown Public Spaces Plan, and this summer's Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot, the City is working to advance Reconciliation with the local Nations and support their visibility on their lands.

As an initial step in this effort, the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot features:

- Planter art wraps completed by:
  - Skwxwú7mesh children of Xwemélch'stn Etsimxwawtxw (Capilano Little Ones School) from K4 to Grade 5 art piece for Earth Day 2024
  - səliłwətał artists Jordan Gallie, Jonas Jones, and Zac George
- Storytelling boards sharing the history of Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, the place name Skwxwú7mesh has for Gastown, the history of səliłwətał and Burrard Inlet, and what we can do now to restore the Inlet for the future
- Welcome translations on sandwich board signage in the local Nations languages:
  - Hənq̓əminəm: ʔəmí ce:p
  - Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim: i chap tl'ikwú7mesh

"We have been out of sight and out of mind on our own lands, for far too long," says Sxwixwtn, Wilson Williams, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw Spokesperson and Council Member. "Lekleki (Gastown) is one of the most historic neighbourhoods in K'emk'emeláy' (Vancouver), but until now, has not reflected the deep connection local Indigenous Peoples have to the area. Seeing our Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw history shared in our Sníchim (language), along with the beautiful artwork from our mén'men (children) in the Water Street Pedestrian Zone makes me immensely proud. I truly hope this initiative is just the first of many in making our beautiful city a more inclusive place for all."

"The Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot is part of our ongoing collaboration with the City of Vancouver to support making Gastown more people-friendly. At the same time, this work is making our səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) culture and history more visible on our traditional lands, alongside our relatives xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band) and the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish Nation)," says Chief Jen Thomas, səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). "As part of this pilot, storyboards and planter box wraps will display vibrant artwork by Tsleil-Waututh Nation artists Olivia George, Jordan Gallie, and Jonas Jones. I look forward to seeing Water Street become a more welcoming space for all."

The Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot is a vibrant and activated "people-first" place that supports business and community connections from July through August. It includes car-free and car-light sections along Water Street and Maple Tree Square and features shared seating, expanded patios, merchandise displays, storytelling and artwork courtesy of the local Nations, live performances and special events.

During the pilot, visitors can enjoy summer festivities in the heart of Gastown in a safe and comfortable environment. Upcoming events include:

- **Gastown Thursday Nights Live Music** (occurs every Thursday night)
- **Aeriosa** – July 4-6
- **Gastown Grandprix** – July 10
- **Open Streets Day (Fully Car-Free)** – August 3
- **Meet Me in Gastown** – August 15
- **Open Streets Day (Fully Car-Free)** – August 31

To see a full list of upcoming events, visit [gastown.org/events](https://gastown.org/events)

Local creatives, residents, businesses and community organizations are invited to host free small-scale events and community-oriented activities in the pedestrian zone through the City's [Open Streets Permit](#). The permit is available at no cost and is part of City efforts to support a vibrant community experience and reimagine our streets as lively spaces for everyone.

### **Observations and Feedback**

Staff are closely observing the pedestrian zone, gathering feedback from residents, businesses, visitors and tourists to adjust and inform future planning. Learnings will guide future planning for pedestrian zone pilots and inform the overall strategy for pedestrianizing Water Street as part of the Gastown Public Space Plan.

To share feedback about the pilot or learn more about the Gastown Public Spaces Plan, stop by an upcoming pop-up event on Water Street or participate in a design workshop. For more information, or to RSVP, visit [shapeyourcity.ca/gastown-public-spaces-plan](https://shapeyourcity.ca/gastown-public-spaces-plan).

### **Getting to Gastown and the Water Street Pedestrian Zone**

Locals, visitors and cruise-ship passengers are encouraged to pop by the Destination Vancouver kiosk at the corner of Water Street and Cordova Street to discover everything Gastown has to offer.

- **Transportation:** Walk, bike, roll, Mobi or take transit whenever possible. Check out our [transit and cycling map](#) to find the best routes and visit [translink.ca/alerts](https://translink.ca/alerts) for more information.
- **Public Bike Share:** Additional Mobi by Rogers public bike share stations are being added to the area, see all locations [here](#).
- **Free Bike Valet:** Safely park your bikes, skates, scooters or strollers for free at the [Bike Valet](#), located at 131 Water Street.
- **Free Transit Pass:** [Courtesy of the Gastown Business Improvement Society](#).
- **Parking:** If you're driving to Gastown, there is plenty of parking available including 280 on-street parking spots and 2,800 off-street parkade options. Check out our [parking map](#) to learn where to park.
  - [Take advantage of free parking \(3 hours, once per week\) at the EasyPark 151 Cordova St Parkade courtesy of the Gastown Business Improvement Society](#).
  - Plan ahead, [follow all detours](#) and obey "no parking" signs in the area.

For more information on all Gastown related projects, visit [vancouver.ca/gastown](https://vancouver.ca/gastown).

### **Media contact:**

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