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To: "Direct to Mayor and Council"

Date: 6/4/2025 4:19:58 PM

Subject: Upcoming news release: Granville Street Plan (June 4, 2025)

Attachments: Granville Street Plan - Key Facts.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Following your approval at today's Standing Committee meeting, I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below news release and attached fact sheet regarding the Granville Street Plan. Please keep this news release embargoed until it goes live from the City media email account later this afternoon.

Maria will reply to this email with the relevant Vancouver.ca link and social media links, once these are live.

Best,

Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x'm θk'y'm (Musqueam), S'wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and s'ilw'at'a (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City of Vancouver
News Release

June 4, 2025

City Council approves 20-year plan to revitalize Granville Street

Phased plan to transform and revitalize downtown Granville into safer, more vibrant destination

Today, Vancouver City Council approved, with amendments, the [Granville Street Plan](#) to guide the transformation of the historic entertainment district into a safer, welcoming and vibrant destination.

“This plan marks the beginning of Granville Street’s next chapter,” said Mayor Ken Sim. “It’s about creating a vibrant, fun space and supporting the local businesses, restaurants, and venues that bring it to life. Granville has long been an iconic part of our downtown core, and we’re committed to making it thrive again.”

In 2023, City Council voted in support of launching the Granville Street Planning Program to revitalize the area and position it as a major cultural and economic destination once again—supporting jobs, tourism, and local businesses.

“Granville has always been a place where people gather—for music, nightlife and community gatherings. This plan helps us honour that legacy while addressing the real challenges the street faces today,” said Josh White, General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability. “We’re creating a path to revitalize the district in a way that’s inclusive, vibrant and future-focused.”

Developed through engagement

The Granville Street Plan was shaped by a [multi-year engagement process](#) with input from local businesses, residents, community organizations, equity-denied groups, service providers, and the x m 0k y m (Musqueam), S wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and s lilw ta (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City staff shared the proposed directions for the plan with the public in **early** 2025 and received [strong support](#) for its overall vision and key moves. The plan also aligns with the Vancouver Plan, and the role of the Metro Core as the principal centre of urban employment, living, arts and culture, tourism and entertainment activity for the city and region.

Vision for future development

The plan guides change in the area through three priority directions:

1. Defining three distinct character areas to support different types of activity, development and public space. This will include an:
 - Entertainment Core: A dynamic destination focused on arts, culture, nightlife, outdoor performances, and hospitality venues.
 - City Centre: A lively civic and commercial hub with new mixed-use residential developments, anchored by a central destination public plaza for gatherings and events.
 - Bridgehead: A quieter mixed-use area that connects Granville Street with nearby neighbourhoods and allows for new residential developments alongside commercial and cultural spaces.
2. Creating a year-round destination public space and pedestrian-only zone featuring day and night programming, amenities, and unique design features. This will start with seasonal pedestrianization and expand overtime as other changes and street improvements progress.
3. Transit improvements to support pedestrianization of the street as buses are re-routed to Seymour and Howe Streets. This requires strong transit priority measures to support transit access and reliability.

Implementation and safety improvements

The Granville Street Plan will be implemented through a flexible and adaptable phased approach. Enhanced public safety and community well-being are key to revitalizing the area, and Granville Street Plan considers safety improvements at every step, prioritizing programs that support gender-based violence prevention and overall safety.

Change in the area will be supported by a District Management Plan, developed in collaboration with partners to address the area's evolving needs including enhanced services, safety initiatives and coordinated programming.

In the near term, implementation will include zoning updates, pedestrian zone pilots, early transit improvements on Granville and Howe and Seymour streets, and initial work to advance District Management. In the long term, the plan will guide major redevelopment, expanded cultural spaces, and the full pedestrianization of the corridor – creating a safer, more inclusive, and vibrant destination for all.

For more information about the Granville Street Plan, please visit: council.vancouver.ca/20250604/documents/pspc1.pdf.

Additional quotes:

“Good Night Out Vancouver is encouraged to see Council support a plan with such a significant focus on gender-based violence in Vancouver’s entertainment district. Nightlife can only thrive when the safety of all women and marginalized genders in the area after dark is prioritized — it creates greater access, builds community connections and keeps patrons and workers coming back. We are looking forward to supporting the evolution of Granville Street into a space where safety, inclusion, and enjoyment go hand in hand.

- Stacey Forrester, Education Director, Good Night Out Vancouver

“Granville Street is more than an entertainment district—it’s one of Vancouver’s most iconic corridors. It connects neighbourhoods, generations, and cultures. For decades, it has been a magnet for shoppers and restaurants goers, and a gathering place for everything from live music and nightlife to parades, protests, and civic celebrations. Destination Vancouver fully supports this vision and the role it will play in strengthening our city’s appeal to locals and visitors.”

- Royce Chwin, President & CEO, Destination Vancouver

“Today’s milestone brings us to the starting line for real investment and transformation on Granville Street. It gives everyone a clear roadmap for how best to work together towards ensuring our iconic street is the vibrant destination we all know it can be. We’re excited about the opportunities ahead, but we also need to move quickly on the immediate safety and street improvements needed to sustain existing businesses as this vision comes to life.”

- Jane Talbot, President & CEO, Downtown Van

“Today’s announcement is welcome news for the businesses on and around Granville Street, including the members of Hospitality Vancouver Association (HVA). The contents of this report indicate an acknowledgement of the important role of Granville Street as the Entertainment District of our city and indicate a renewed focus on ensuring the street achieves its full potential. On behalf of our members, I want to thank staff for their work on this project to date, and City Council for this demonstration of confidence in a renewed and enhanced Granville Street and Entertainment District.”

- Nate Sabine, Director of Business Development, Blueprint

Note to editors: Please see amended motion below. This is a draft copy provided for your understanding and the published minutes are the official record of the meeting.

- A. THAT Council approve the Granville Street Plan, generally as presented in Appendix D of the Report dated May 20, 2024, entitled “Granville Street Plan”, with the following amendments:

5.1 Re-route Granville Street bus services to Howe and Seymour Streets with strong transit priority measures

Policies

Phases 1 & 2 - Near and Medium Term

5.1.1 Seasonally re-route bus service to Howe and Seymour Streets during pedestrian zone pilots with temporary bus priority lanes, bus stop improvements, and bus bulbs.

5.2 Improve the public realm on Howe and Seymour Streets to accommodate more people and maintain high-quality transit service

Policies

5.2.1 Provide comfortable, safe, and accessible waiting areas at bus stops with improved lighting, shelters; explore options for benches, bollards and widened sidewalks during Phase 1.

5.3 Enhance the walking experience and provide a safe and comfortable active travel environment

Policies

5.3.5 Explore options to provide bi-directional cycling and micro-mobility access on Granville Street in a low-speed shared environment when the street is pedestrianized to provide access to SkyTrain stations and destinations along the street and to join the Grandville Connector to Dunsmuir Street. Provide measures to temporarily suspend cycling and micromobility access along some stretches of Granville Street during special events.

5.3.6 Explore options to ensure pedestrian safety along the full length of Granville

Street's low-speed bi-directional cycling and micromobility route via surface markings and signage so that cyclists and micro-mobility users understand where they may travel, and pedestrians know where they might expect them.

5.3.7 Explore options for the installation of an attended indoor bike parkade to provide safe and secure bicycle parking, thereby reducing bicycle traffic along the pedestrianised corridor, minimising the risk of bike theft, and encouraging visitors to the revitalised area to use active transportation. The bike parkade should include safe and secure public toilets to address the severe shortage of public toilet facilities downtown, ensuring equitable access for all pedestrians, particularly seniors, children, and individuals with disabilities.

5.3.8 In keeping with the core design principle that Granville Street should be designed with safety, inclusivity, and equity at its core, ensure that staff engage with Vancouver's disability community, inclusive design experts, and those with lived experience of disability to ensure their needs are reflected in the final design to maximise accessibility, including but not limited to ensuring that curbs and stairs are avoided where possible and that smooth paved surfaces are used to reduce vibrations for wheelchair users.

- B. THAT subject to approval of A above, Council approve the amendments to the Central Business District (CBD) and CBD Shoulder Rezoning Policy (Areas A, B, C1 & F and Areas C3 & H), generally as presented in Appendix B of the Report dated May 20, 2024, entitled "Granville Street Plan", including:
- (i) Renaming the policy as the Downtown Rezoning Policy;
 - (ii) Adding rezoning policies for the Granville Street Entertainment District; and
 - (iii) Incorporating the Downtown South Rezoning Policy (Potential "Benefit Capacity" in Downtown RTS 07500).
- C. THAT subject to approval of A above, Council approve the Granville Street Special Design District Guidelines, generally as presented in Appendix E of the Report dated May 20, 2024, entitled "Granville Street Plan", and repeal the Granville Street (Downtown South) Design Guidelines and the Design Handbook for Building Frontages on Granville Street.

- D. THAT subject to approval of A above, Council approve, in principle, amendments to the Sign By-law, to expand the animated neon signage area to Davie Street, to align with the Granville Street Plan, generally as presented in Appendix A of the Report dated May 20, 2024, entitled “Granville Street Plan”;

FURTHER THAT, the Director of Legal Services be instructed to bring forward amendments to the Sign By-law for enactment, generally as presented in Appendix A of the above-noted report.

- E. THAT subject to approval of A above, Council approve consequential amendments to related land use documents to align with the Granville Street Plan generally as presented in Appendix C of the Report dated May 20, 2024, entitled “Granville Street Plan”.
- F. THAT subject to approval of A above, Council amend the Community Amenity Contributions Policy for Rezoning to enable Downtown Commercial Linkage target allocations to align with the Granville Street Plan, generally as presented in Appendix F of the Report dated May 20, 2024, entitled “Granville Street Plan”.
- G. THAT subject to approval of B above, Council repeal the Granville Street Interim Rezoning Policy.
- H. THAT Council direct staff to initiate a comprehensive review of locations for a new street-end public view to the North Shore Mountains from an origin point on Granville Street in the downtown as part of the Central Waterfront Plan project.
- I. THAT subject to approval of A above, the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability be instructed to make an application, for Council's consideration, to amend the Downtown Official Development Plan (DODP) to a new Downtown District Schedule in the Zoning and Development By-law to align with the Granville Street Plan.
- J. THAT A through I above be adopted on the following conditions:
- (i) THAT any approval that may be granted following the public hearing shall not obligate the City to enact any rezoning by-laws; and

- (ii) THAT the City and all its officials, including the Approving Officer, shall not in any way be limited or directed in the exercise of their authority or discretion, regardless of when they are called upon to exercise such authority or discretion.

- K. THAT Council direct staff to work with BC Housing and the Province of British Columbia to offer the use of City-owned sites to replace SRO and supportive housing units currently located in the non-residential Entertainment Core area of the Granville Entertainment District (GED) with modern, dignified, self-contained housing, with robust wraparound services and capital and operational funding to come from BC Housing and the Federal and Provincial governments;

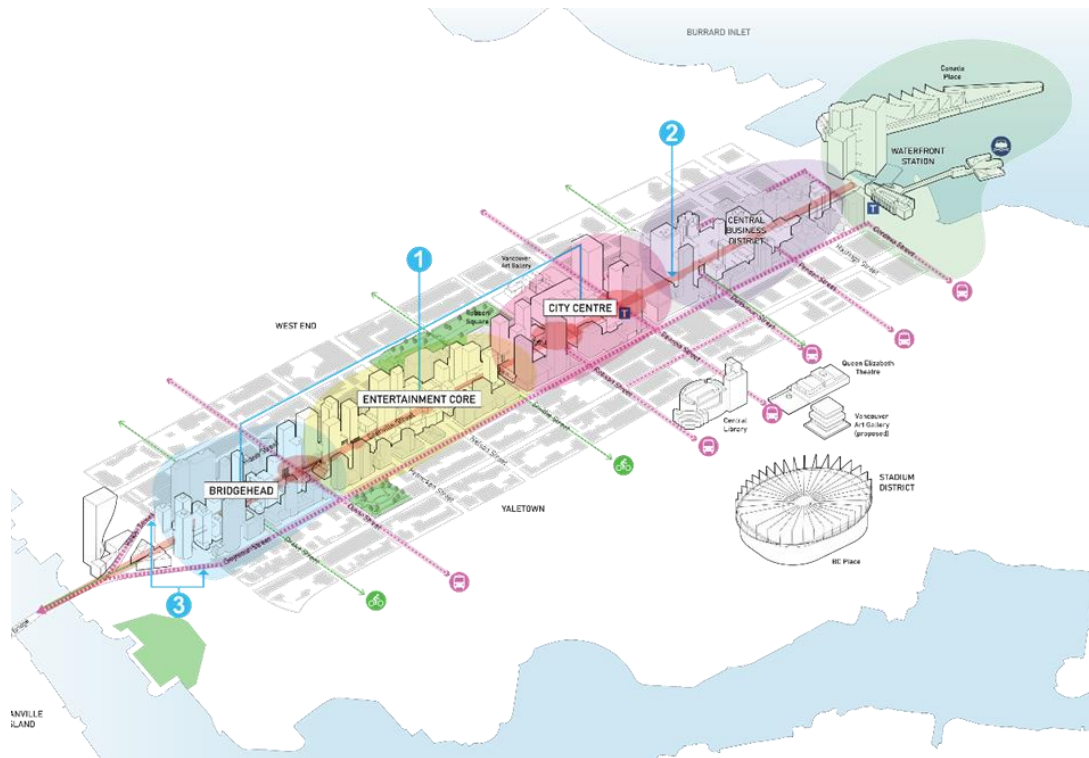
- FURTHER THAT staff be directed to report back to Council on this matter as soon as possible as part of the larger Granville Street planning process.

- L. THAT Council direct staff to consider further recommendations for SRA designated buildings based on an analysis of the 2024 SRO Tenant Survey and an expanded consultation process with impacted SRO tenants, and report back to Council.

- M. THAT staff report back on options to increase social housing units in NMHO projects to replace SRO housing impacted by the Granville Plan, including, but not limited to, options and implications to utilize VAHEF non-market projects to meet SRA bylaw replacement obligations and prevent the loss of deeply affordable units.

Granville Street Plan – Key Facts

The following highlights key land use policy, timelines, and focus areas from the Granville Street Plan, as approved by Vancouver City Council.



Land Use: Three Character Areas

1. Entertainment Core (Smithe to Davie):

- Nightlife and cultural heart of the corridor
- Expanded live music venues, outdoor performances, rooftop patios
- New hotels and commercial development
- Residential use restricted to preserve nighttime vibrancy

2. City Centre (Georgia to Smithe):

- Civic and commercial hub with new mixed-use developments, including residential
- Some of Vancouver's tallest buildings planned
- Reimagined Granville-Robson plaza for civic events
- Integrated transit access and new hotel, cultural, and social housing space

3. Bridgehead (Davie to Granville Bridge):

- Quieter mixed-use area connecting to Yaletown and surrounding neighbourhoods
- Includes housing, hotel, and cultural spaces
- Emphasis on noise-sensitive design and revitalization

Public Space and Transportation

- Creation of a destination public space to offer a signature downtown experience supported by a pedestrianized corridor along Granville St. The space will be delivered through a phased approach, starting with seasonal street closures supporting live music and events leading to a year-round pedestrianized zone.
- Re-route existing Granville Street bus services onto Howe and Seymour streets to facilitate a pedestrian-only zone
- Implement supportive transit priority infrastructure on Howe and Seymour and enhance the walking experience.

Safety and Well-being

- Ongoing collaboration with community partner organizations and the Vancouver Police Department to enhance safety for everyone.
- Prioritization of programs that support gender-based violence prevention and overall safety in the area.
- Expand and enhance indoor destinations and outdoor public spaces to bring more people to the street throughout the day and night

Cultural and Economic Revitalization

- Incentives for new and expanded cultural spaces (e.g., Orpheum, Commodore, Vogue).
- Support for restaurants, nightlife, retail, and hotel uses.
- More diverse activities throughout the day and evening.

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotels and Social Housing

- **Entertainment Core**
 - Replace existing SROs over time and secure housing for relocated tenants.
 - Existing residential buildings in this area can continue operating but may only be redeveloped with non-residential uses (see Downtown Rezoning Policy).
- **City Centre and Bridgehead**
 - Allow limited residential to support replacing existing SROs.
 - Include new self-contained social housing in larger mixed-use developments.

Phased Implementation

Phase 1 (0–5 years):

- Zoning changes, pilot seasonal pedestrian zones, early safety and transit improvements
- Public input on future public space and street design.

- Develop a District Management Plan in collaboration with partners to address the area's evolving needs including enhanced services, safety initiatives and coordinated programming.
- Implementation of initial District Management Plan actions.

Phase 2 (6–10 years):

- Major public realm and cultural space investments
- Permanent transit and pedestrian improvements

Phase 3 (11–20 years):

- Full pedestrianization of Granville Street with buses moving to Howe and Seymour Streets
- Major redevelopment and buildout of the entertainment district