

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE PLAN

Community Newsletter #5: June 2016



Welcome

to the fifth edition of the community update for the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan. These newsletters will keep you informed about the progress on implementing the plan, upcoming events, and other important information. Since the plan was approved, we have been moving forward on many quick start and short-term projects:



Improved Well-being for All

New Innovative Childcare Facility in Gastown

We are pleased to announce a new 37 space childcare project, which includes 12 spaces for toddlers under three years of age, and 25 spaces for children aged three to five years. The childcare space will be built on the rooftop of an existing City-owned parking structure to repurpose under-used space in the DTES where

demand for childcare is high and land is costly. Construction of the childcare space is expected to begin in Fall/Winter 2017 and open in 2018. The City-owned facility will be operated by a non-profit agency specialising in childcare that will work with, and develop partnerships with, the local community.

Healthy Homes for All

New Social Housing in the DEOD

A key objective of the DTES Plan is maintaining and increasing the supply of affordable housing, including the replacement of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels with self-contained social housing. This is a priority in the Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District (DEOD), which contains the most SRO hotels. The DEOD Official Development Plan was updated so any development over a certain size must provide 60 per cent social housing and 40 per cent secured market rental.

The social housing must provide at least one-third of units rented at rates no higher than the shelter component of Income Assistance. Another third targets rents in line with Housing Income Limits (HILs) rates and the remaining

third, affordable market rents. The social housing units must be owned by a non-profit, the City, or the provincial or federal governments and secured through legal agreements.

In January 2016, the first of these projects was approved at 288 East Hastings Street and includes 104 social housing units and 68 market rental units. This is an example of an innovative development that supports social housing, and encourages market rental rather than strata-ownership housing in the area.

Vibrant & Inclusive Local Economy

Creating Space for Local Non-profit Organisations

Many non-profits are facing difficulties in finding available and affordable space in the DTES for their operations. In response, we are renovating the first and second floors of the Woodward's heritage building to create more non-profit office space. Once renovations are complete, EMBERS (Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society) will expand their operations onto the 2nd floor, with a portion of the space remaining for community use.



Downtown Eastside Capital Grants Program

Following the March 2016 call out for DTES Capital Grant submissions, we received and reviewed 28 applications. Many of these focused on community economic development and improving community assets. A report recommending a list of applications for approval is tentatively scheduled for Council consideration in mid-June 2016.

Several capital grant projects from previous grant rounds have been completed, one example is:

First United Church - New boiler

Grant funding allowed the First United Church to replace a 50-year old boiler system. The new system is energy efficient, reliable and enables them to better serve the 500+ homeless and low-income DTES residents that depend on their programs and facilities each day. The facility also opens each night as a low-barrier shelter with space for 40 men and 20 women.



Downtown Eastside Street Market Relocation

In March 2016, the Portland Hotel Society (PHS) was chosen to operate markets at 62 East Hastings Street and 501 Powell Street, in partnership with the DTES Street Market Society. Their capacity and expertise will be key to a successful Community Economic Development Platform at 501 Powell Street.

Site preparations at 501 Powell are complete, and we will be working with PHS and the Street Market Society to plan the transition to their new home over the summer. The market at 62 East Hastings will be open Monday to Friday, 501 Powell on Saturdays, and Pigeon Park on Sundays.



Improved Transportation

Public Bike Share

Launching this summer, the public bike share system will make bikes available for short-term use. The 1,500 bikes will be located at 150 stations throughout downtown to 16th Avenue, and from Arbutus to

Main Streets. The seven-speed bikes are designed for short, one-way trips from one station to another. Helmets will be available on bikes at no additional cost.

To learn more, visit vancouver.ca/bikeshare



Bike Network Improvements

Construction is wrapping up on new protected bike lanes downtown including upgrades to Beatty Street, and a new bike lane on Cambie from Dunsmuir to Water Streets in Gastown. They provide more direct access between the DTES, downtown, and Cambie Bridge.

The bike lanes are protected by curbs, planters, and parked cars similar to Dunsmuir between Beatty and Cambie Streets. The plans also included upgrades to Richards Street, which are being considered based on public feedback and technical review. We will be engaging with you shortly on an alternative design.

To learn more, visit vancouver.ca/downtownbikenetork



Pender Street Water Main Upgrades

The essential water infrastructure upgrades along Pender Street are nearly finished. The replacement of water mains from Carrall Street to Gore Avenue and Cambie to Seymour Streets has been completed. The final section from Carrall to Cambie Streets is expected to wrap up this summer.

To learn more, visit vancouver.ca/penderstreetwatermain

Street Improvements

Creating a safe, accessible, and enjoyable walking environment is a top priority in the DTES. As part of the Pender Street water main upgrades, the intersection at Columbia and Pender Street has been fully restored. The retention of the heritage granite curbs and cobble-lined crosswalk, and upgraded sidewalk ramps highlight the distinct identity, and cultural, civic and historic significance of Vancouver's Chinatown as a National Historic Site of Canada.



A new pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of Keefer Street and Princess Avenue is planned for 2016/2017. This will make walking to and from Lord Strathcona Elementary School and Community Centre a more convenient, comfortable and delightful experience.

Arts & Culture Opportunities

Woodward's Cultural Amenity Space Tenant Improvements

Renovations are underway at the Woodward's cultural amenity space on the first floor and basement level to upgrade and create rehearsal, production, creation, and presentation spaces. This is funded through the City's Capital Plan, DTES Capital Grants, Cultural Infrastructure Grants, with support from the federal and provincial governments. The Kokoro Dance Theatre, Vancouver Moving Theatre, Raven Spirit Dance, and Vancouver International Dance Festival are expected to move in this summer.



Photo credit: AMU architects

Celebrate Heritage

2016 Chinese Society Buildings Matching Grants

For over 100 years, the Chinese family clan benevolent societies have provided housing, cultural, social, education and recreation services to their communities, and are key partners in Vancouver's Chinatown revitalisation initiative.

In May 2016, Council approved the third round of matching grants—\$496,000 to 10 Chinese Societies for critical building upgrades. These matching grants help protect heritage and affordable and seniors housing in Chinatown and the DTES.

To learn more, visit vancouver.ca/chinatown



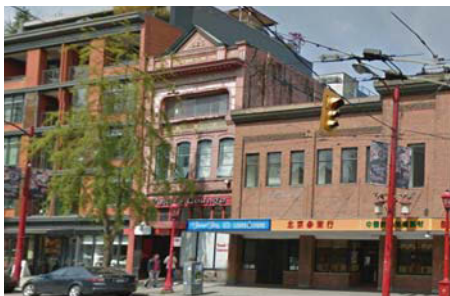
Chinese Society Legacy Program

In June 2016, we will be recommending Council approve a \$100,000 grant to the Chinatown Society Heritage Buildings Association (CSHBA) to implement the first phase of the



Chinese Society Legacy Program. Phase one of this program aims to prepare two to three buildings for rehabilitation in 2017. This grant will empower the CSHBA to undertake program coordination and advocacy, business planning for the phase one buildings, and fundraising. We are continuing to work collaboratively with the CSHBA to implement the program and will provide a one-year update next summer on fundraising results.

To learn more, visit vancouver.ca/chinatown



Parks & Open Space

Blood Alley Square/Trounce Alley Redesign

We have hired Enns Gauthier Landscape Architects to lead a highly-qualified team of consultants with considerable experience in the DTES to redesign Blood Alley Square/Trounce Alley in Gastown. The redesign will improve this important public space for

neighbourhood gatherings; conserve its important heritage characteristics; propose new ways to manage commercial dumpsters and waste in the alley; and create a stewardship plan that involves local residents and communities.



Blood Alley Square/Trounce Alley, 1975 Archives COV-S511---:CVA 780-667

The redesign is expected to be completed by March 2017. We will be engaging with you this summer and fall. Once the redesign is completed, we will request funding from Council to build the newly redesigned Blood Alley Square/Trounce Alley.

To learn more, visit vancouver.ca/blood-alley-square

Community Place-making

Hastings Street and Kiwassa Urban Design Guidelines

In February 2016, we held a workshop with community residents and businesses to hear how they imagine local business should look and feel along

Hastings Street in Strathcona and Kiwassa. This feedback will help us to further develop and shape draft guidelines that will be presented to the community for further comments.

To learn more, visit vancouver.ca/hastings-kiwassa



Well-managed Built Form

Neighbourhood Fit

In February 2016, we published the Neighbourhood Fit Considerations bulletin and evaluation form, which help guide new developments and businesses to better fit into the neighbourhood and contribute to community priorities.

Read the bulletin under Documents at vancouver.ca/dtes

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