



# DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE PLAN

Community Newsletter #6: March 2017



## Parks & Open Space

### Blood Alley Square/Trounce Alley Redesign

In fall 2016, we held a workshop with community organizations, residents and business groups inviting them to become active partners in the stewardship of the square. We discussed how to activate the space, and ensure the square remains a safe, lively, and inclusive space for all. In February 2017, we held a family-friendly event in the square, and heard from the community on what they value and would like to see in the space.

To learn more, please visit: [vancouver.ca/blood-alley-square](http://vancouver.ca/blood-alley-square)



Photo credit: Maryse Zeidler, CBC

### Survivors Totem Pole

On November 5, 2016, the 27-foot Survivors Totem Pole was raised in Pigeon Park in a community potlatch, following drumming, dancing, and celebration in regalia. The Survivors Totem Pole, which symbolises community

resilience, was carved by DTES resident Skundall Bernie Williams. The community-led project received a grant of \$50,000 from the Vancouver Park Board.



## Community Place-making

### Recognizing Lilian To

Lilian To has left a substantial legacy through her achievements in making Vancouver a more inclusive city. In July 2016, a bilingual name sign and commemorative panels were installed at Pender Street and Shanghai Alley to recognise her contributions to Vancouver. The Great Beginnings Program provided \$30,000 for the commemoration.



## Well-managed Built Form

### Hastings Street and Kiwassa Urban Design Guidelines

A consultant has been retained to assist with the Hastings Street and Kiwassa Urban Design Guidelines, and we will be bringing a report to Council with the draft design guidelines by summer 2017.

To learn more, please visit: [vancouver.ca/hastings-kiwassa](http://vancouver.ca/hastings-kiwassa)

### Chinatown Economic Revitalization Update and Development Policy Review

We are preparing an update on the Chinatown Economic Revitalization Action Plan as a three-year review. We are also proposing changes to the development policies in Chinatown to improve the form of new buildings, manage change, clarify density, protect heritage, and stimulate the economy. We will be bringing a report to Council in summer 2017.

To learn more, please visit: [vancouver.ca/chinatown](http://vancouver.ca/chinatown)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Phone 3-1-1,  
[vancouver.ca/dtes](http://vancouver.ca/dtes)  
[dtes@vancouver.ca](mailto:dtes@vancouver.ca)

## Welcome

to the sixth 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

### Access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food

The availability of healthy and affordable food has a direct impact on one's mental and physical well-being. A number of grants have been provided to support community organisations to improve the procurement and distribution of healthy food in the DTES, as well as to support the Chinese community

in connecting with sustainable food choices. This includes grants to the Potluck Cafe, Strathcona Community Association, Hua Foundation, and Hastings Urban Farm.

### néc'a?mat ct Strathcona Branch Library

The néc'a?mat ct Strathcona branch and YWCA Cause We Care House is a joint initiative featuring the newest Vancouver Public Library branch, community and family programming, and safe, affordable housing for low-income single mothers and their children. The 11,000-square foot library will be an inclusive public space with a digital creation space, meeting, programming, and community gathering spaces, as well as a diverse multilingual collection. The new library branch will open this spring.

To learn more, visit [vpl.ca](http://vpl.ca)



## Healthy Homes for All

### Single Room Occupancy Hotels

Housing affordability remains a concern citywide, especially in the DTES where the median income is much lower than the rest of the city. A key priority of the DTES plan is to upgrade rooms in Single Room Occupancy hotels to self-contained social housing units, while maintaining affordability.

One way to achieve this is through grants to non-profit housing providers. For example, in 2016 Council approved a grant of \$355,000 to the Community Builders Benevolent Foundation to upgrade 71 Single Room Accommodation-designated rooms at the Dodson Rooms.

### Housing Reset

We are in the process of updating and resetting the Housing and Homelessness Strategy. This includes gaining a better understanding of the Vancouver housing market, providing a five- and 10-year outlook, outlining future policy directions, and establishing new targets, metrics, and goals.

To learn more, visit: [vancouver.ca/housing](http://vancouver.ca/housing).



### Vibrant & Inclusive Local Economy

#### Community Economic Development Strategy

Projects are now underway to implement the CED Strategy. Urban Core Community Workers Group and EMBERS will be assisting DTES residents at the Lux Hotel Employment and Income Generating Hub. The 312 Main Street Centre for Social and Economic Innovation will open in June 2017. On April 21-22, 2017, we will be hosting a CED Summit in partnership with SFU.

To learn more, visit: [www.hopefuleconomics.ca](http://www.hopefuleconomics.ca)

#### Downtown Eastside Capital Grants Program

This spring, the DTES Capital Grants Program will be accepting applications from non-profit organization to help support projects in the DTES that implement the social, economic and environmental objectives in the DTES Plan. The program partners with local non-profits and provides matching grants to upgrade or improve their facilities and equipment.

The PACE society was under threat of losing their previous space and with a DTES Capital Grant, they were able to secure a new space on Hastings Street and undertake renovations to

accommodate their growing service delivery needs. These tenant improvements include the creation of three new offices and a workshop room. The PACE society is now able to provide more services to their community and continue to offer a safe and comfortable drop-in space at their new location.

Visit [vancouver.ca/dtes](http://vancouver.ca/dtes) to learn more, and for the DTES Capital Grant application package.



### Improved Transportation

#### Street Improvements

Upgrading streets and sidewalks helps make it more enjoyable when you walk and cycle. Recent improvements to enhance accessibility include new sidewalk ramps, audible pedestrian crossing tones, countdown timers, and adjusted crossing times along Prior/Venables Street.

New protected bike lanes, such as on Beatty and Cambie streets, and additional public

bike share stations make it more comfortable and convenient when you cycle in and to the Downtown Eastside.



#### Water Street Rehabilitation

Transportation planning is beginning for the entire Gastown area to inform the future rehabilitation of Water Street, one of Vancouver's earliest streets. The brick pavers, granite, cluster-globe lamps and bollards added in the 1970s Gastown beautification project have become a part of the area's much-cherished character and need repairs. We will also be asking you later in 2017 how we can make it more comfortable to walk and cycle along Water Street, as well as enhance road safety and move goods efficiently.

### Arts & Culture Opportunities

#### Public Art in the new *néc'a?mat ct* Strathcona Branch Library

Strathcona artist Erica Stocking has been commissioned to create

a public art piece for Vancouver Public Library's newest branch. Stocking's art piece, 'All my favourite people are animals' will highlight the library's entrance, and is described as an "innovative and sculptural approach... considering imagery for multiple audiences".



Artist: Erica Stocking  
Title: All my favourite people are animals

Local artist Lisa g Nielsen has been selected as the community digital artist to create a collaborative digital art piece. The word *néc'a?mat ct* embodies the concept of 'we are one' in *hə́h̓qəmi̓nəh̓m* (*xʷməθkʷəy̓əm*/Musqueam)

The digital art project involves engaging the community to explore the idea of *néc'a?mat ct*, and through a learning and sharing process, develop a digital art piece to be displayed on a large digital screen in the new library branch.

To learn more, visit: [vpl.ca/about/details/NCS](http://vpl.ca/about/details/NCS).

### Celebrate Heritage

#### Chinese Society Legacy Program

In June 2016, we provided an update to Council on the overall implementation and funding strategy for the Chinese Society Legacy Program, and requested initial funding for first phase of the program.

Since then, the Chinatown Society Heritage Buildings Association (CSHBA) has hired program champions Karen Wan-Gauthier and Leslie Shieh to undertake program coordination and advocacy, including supporting the Societies participating in the first phase of the program.

JTW Consulting has been hired to complete business plans for these initial program participants. Beth Gauthier, a professional fundraiser has also been hired to explore funding opportunities and develop a fund raising plan for the program.

To learn more, visit: [vancouver.ca/chinatown](http://vancouver.ca/chinatown)



#### Recognizing Tangible and Intangible Aboriginal Heritage

Research is currently underway to support community efforts to identify, conserve and celebrate tangible and intangible Aboriginal heritage, and is expected to be finished in October.



Aboriginal heritage values are also being identified through the Heritage Register upgrade consultation process. We will be bringing a report to Council in winter 2017 or spring 2018.

Together with the Vancouver Park Board, we are working with the *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw* (Squamish), and *mi ce:p kʷətxwíləm* (Tsleil-Waututh) to identify sites of importance to the three Coast Salish Nations within the Downtown Eastside and the wider city, and provide the traditional names for those locations.

To learn more, visit: [vancouver.ca/aboriginal](http://vancouver.ca/aboriginal)