

Principles, Processes and Relationships of The Downtown Eastside Local Area Planning Process¹

August 25, 2011 (Edited Version - January 24, 2012 – substitution of the word
'Aboriginal' for 'Indigenous')

Background

On January 20th City Council passed a motion with the following instruction for the City Manager:

1. *Strike a committee to enhance and accelerate a DTES Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) and a strategy to implement the Council's 2005 DTES Housing Plan.*²
2. *The committee to be co-chaired by DNC and BCS with one representative from the Strathcona Residents Association and liaison from City Planning. The co-chairs will decide on the composition of the committee.*
3. *The City Manager will ensure resources to ensure timely completion of the work of the committee by December 31st, 2011.*

As of June 14, 2011 the Building Community Society and the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Council have now held 16 meetings. BCS and DNC and the City have held 8 meetings.

These meetings have dealt with the following subjects:

- Purpose and terms of reference of the LAPP (described here as "Principles, Processes and Relationships")
- Organization and structure of the LAPP, particularly the relationship between the LAPP committee and city staff
- Committee composition and role of the co-chairs
- Principles of participation to engage the whole community
- Resources that are required to engage the whole community
- City incentivization of market development throughout the course of the LAPP
- Accountability and reporting relationships: the LAPP committee to the community and to City Council; the role of City staff.

BCS, DNC and COV have produced this document to guide their partnership and as a basis for discussion in the community as the LAPP is initiated.

PRINCIPLES

1. The primary purpose of the LAP Process is to ensure that the future of the Downtown Eastside improves the lives of those who currently live in the area, particularly low-

¹ The DTES "Local Area Planning Process" will seek to describe a desired future for the DTES and create a framework of programs, policies and plans for city hall to follow to achieve that future. To do that the LAPP Committee will reach out to as much of the DTES community as possible to document what is important to everyone, to describe where things seem to be going well and not so well, what can be done about them, and develop programs, policies and plans to ensure the best future for the community.

² See the COV 2005 DTES Housing Plan here: vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf/dteshousingplan.pdf

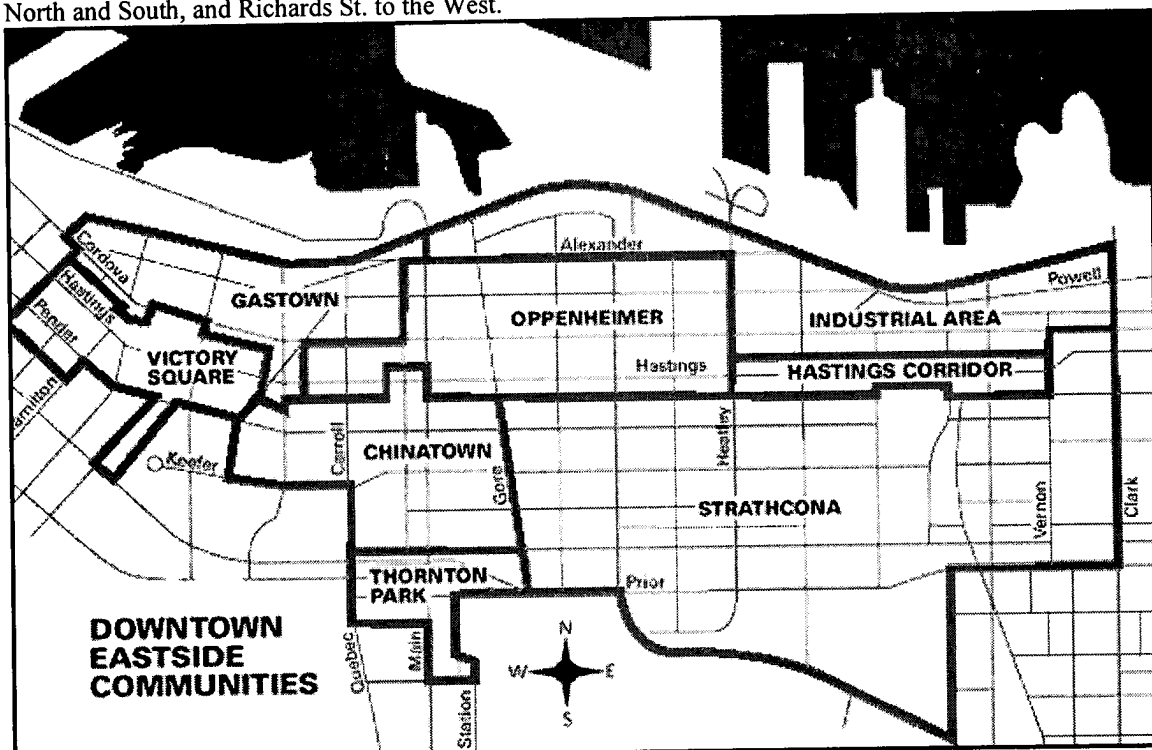
income³ people and those who are most vulnerable which will benefit the city as a whole.⁴

2. While recognizing that no single process can represent the rich diversity and difference in the DTES, the Local Area Planning Committee is responsible for ensuring that all sectors of the community have an opportunity to participate in the LAPP. The LAPP Committee will make special efforts to ensure low-income residents are represented on the committee proportionate to their numbers in the DTES. A priority will be given to overcoming barriers to participation generated by poverty, racialization, citizenship status, class, colonization,⁵ language, gender, age, sexual and cognitive abilities and mental and physical health concerns that could limit the inclusion of the voices these community members.

3. The co-chairs will strive to ensure the work of the committee is transparent and accurately reflects the views that are presented from as many sectors of the DTES as

³ “Low-income” is broadly defined by the City of Vancouver as those who are living under the low-income cut off line. In the Downtown Eastside, and for the purpose of the LAPP, the definition of “Low-Income” will be for residents who depend on Income Assistance, Old Age Pension, part-time minimum wage, informal and unregulated labour, and volunteer work to survive. “Low-Income” people in the DTES subsist well below the city’s low-income cut-off line and the Canadian poverty-line.

⁴ Downtown Eastside boundaries as defined by the City of Vancouver and accepted for the sake of the Local Area Planning Process: Roughly Clark Drive to the East, the industrial area and traintracks to the North and South, and Richards St. to the West.



⁵ If the LAP process is to engage with Aboriginal people in the neighbourhood then the committee must recognize and consider the effects of colonization on Aboriginal people who are disproportionate within DTES low-income and homeless populations, particularly as the DTES is on Unceded Coast Salish – Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish – territories.

possible.

4. As instructed by Council the LAPP Committee will include representation from the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Council (DNC), Building Community Society (BCS), Strathcona Residents Association and a liason from City Planning. The committee recognizes the fact that poverty and homelessness disproportionately impact Indigenous people, people of colour, women, people without citizenship status, IV drug users, sex workers, transgendered people, and people who struggle with mental and physical health and cognitive issues. The co-chairs are responsible to make the rest of the committee membership inclusive of the rich diversity of DTES residents and their perspectives. To achieve this the co-chairs will have particular regard towards the following: Out of the committee as a whole the co-chairs will strive to ensure that at least 50% of those involved are women, men and transgendered people of colour, and that Aboriginal people – prioritizing Aboriginal womens’ voices – have strong representation on the committee. At the same time the LAPP committee will work to ensure the involvement of other interests that are important to the area’s future, always making special efforts to ensure low-income residents form the majority.

5. The City will encourage people and organizations who approach the City directly with input regarding the DTES LAPP to work with the LAPP Committee and the City will share with the Committee any information it receives from these sources. This does not affect every body’s right to directly access city council.

6. There will be different opinions and interests that may sometimes not be resolved. In such instances, when consensus is not possible, separate opinions will be recorded, reflected in the final Local Area Plan report, and provided for public and Council’s information.

7. While the City’s DTES Housing Plan will inform the work of the LAPP Committee, the LAPP will need to consider the social, economic and environmental impact of current and future policies on the tenure and assets of the low-income community. Social mix, rate of change, housing and income mix, affordability and gentrification and health and social services will be among the points of discussion through the planning process.

8. The development of the Council-directed Social Impact Assessment will be pursued as a priority of the LAPP work program.

9. The LAPP Committee wishes to provide input to the Planning and Housing Staff as early as feasible in the enquiry and application process for development permits, rezoning proposals, Heritage Revitalization Agreements (HRAs) and new incentive programs for market development in the DTES with a particular focus on the net impact of any such proposal on social housing and the relationship of market development units to existing and proposed housing units.

With this in mind the City will refer all zoning and development proposals which have reached the formal application stage and new incentive programs for DTES market

developments to the LAPP committee for timely comment prior to them proceeding to Council or the Director of Planning for discussion/decision.

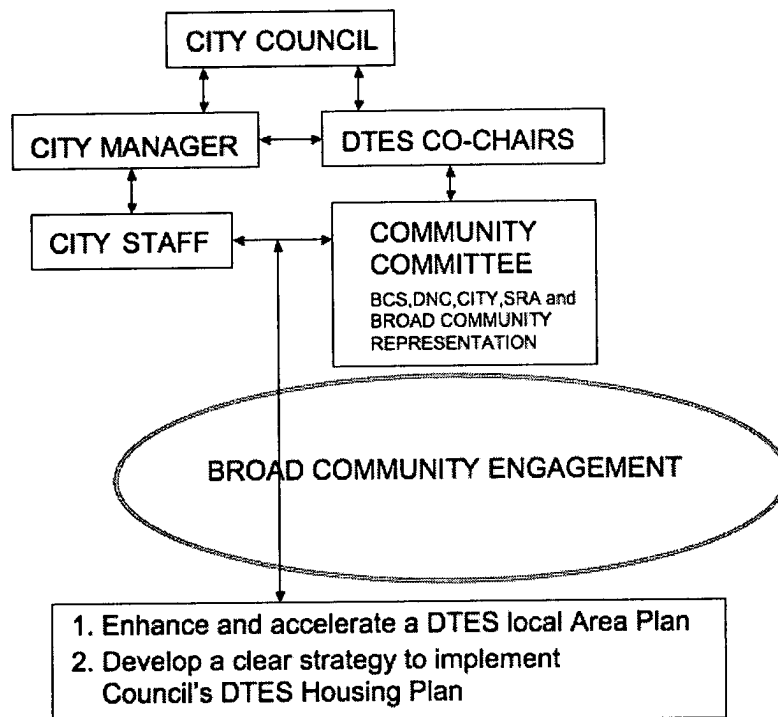
Furthermore the city staff will bring forward to the committee any information (anonymized) in regard to proposals at the informal inquiry stage for discussion and input.

PROCESSES AND RELATIONSHIPS

The diagram below illustrates the processes, roles and relationships between the primary participants in the processes of producing a DTES Local Area Plan and a strategy to implement the City’s DTES Housing Plan. The goal is to seek consensus through a partnership among all participants using transparent and cooperative working procedures.

1. City staff, in partnership with the LAPP Committee, will undertake the development of the local area planning program and the resulting Local Area Plan. The LAP will reflect community consultations, including actions that may be recommended during the planning process.


2. City staff, under the direction of the City Manager, will provide professional and technical advice to the Committee and will be responsible for organizing the community consultation process as developed with the committee. Staff will prepare progress reports and the final Local Area Plan report and recommendations in partnership with the LAPP Committee and the Committee will speak to the report at City Council.



Note: As an aid to the planning process BCS has produced a report that summarizes the various government and community planning documents regarding the DTES: “Downtown Eastside Plans, Policies, Programs, Projects and Proposals at a Glance.”

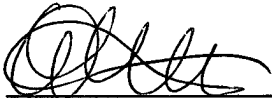
Signatures:

I understand and hereby agree to these Terms of Reference (edited to substitute the word ‘Aboriginal’ for ‘Indigenous’).



Dr. Penny Ballem
City Manager
City of Vancouver

September 19, 2011
And January 24, 2012



Downtown Eastside
Neighbourhood Council

September 19, 2011
And January 24, 2012



Building Community
Society

September 19, 2011
And January 24, 2012

