

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE PLAN

Community Newsletter #8: March 2018

Welcome

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

Improved Well-being for All

Food Policy Update

The DTES Plan aims to create food-related jobs, expand food growing, and improve access to food. The City recently worked with Sole Foods farm to relocate one of their sites and provide \$34,000 for urban agriculture. The City also signed a letter of intent with the Greater Vancouver Food Bank to work with them in their relocation.



Healthy Homes for All

Since September, over 600 units of new social housing have been approved inside the Downtown Eastside. These include 213 units at 124 Dunlevy, 90 units at 177 W Pender, 20 units at 128 Powell St., 80 units at 33 W Cordova, and 231 units at 58 W Hastings. Many of these newly-approved units will rent at \$375 and will provide secure, affordable homes for the City's very low-income residents.



Vibrant & Inclusive Local Economy

EMBERS Eastside

The long anticipated reinvention of the Lux Hotel into a Low-Barrier Income and Employment centre is on schedule for this March. The name of this new hub, created through a partnership with EMBERS, Urban Core, and other partners, is EMBERS Eastside Works.

Community Economic Development Strategy

Research is underway to understand what opportunities exist to use our employment lands to fulfil the material needs of future development, particularly as the Community Benefits Agreement Policy is on schedule to bring to City Council this summer. Research findings are anticipated by May 2018.

CIRES Partnership

The Community Impact Real Estate Society has signed the head-lease to 57 of BC Housing's ground-floor commercial retail units and is developing its work-plan and strategic priorities for space improvements, retail programming, and tenant capacity building.



Improved Transportation

Alexander Bikeway

Improving the Alexander Street Bikeway will fill a major gap in the bike network by making it safer for everyone to share the road and create better cycling connections between Strathcona and Gastown. The recommended changes will involve changing the speed limit to 30 km/hr, traffic calming, and adding new signage to indicate it is a shared street for people cycling and driving. We have talked with local businesses, residents, and stakeholders about options, and we will continue to refine the designs with local stakeholders. A final design is expected in the spring of 2018. See the recommended design options at: <http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/alexander-bikeway-preliminary-design-proposals.pdf>



Strathcona BIA MAP Project

The Strathcona Business Improvement Association (SBIA) just completed a Mobility Advocacy Plan (MAP) which looked at transportation and mobility in Strathcona. With over 700 businesses in the neighbourhood, MAP Strathcona identifies 15 actions to improve employee transportation options for the SBIA to pursue over a seven-year horizon. Review the final plan here: http://strathconabia.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/SBIA-MAPstrathcona_FINAL_lowreso.pdf

Promoting Visibility and Safety in Winter

Transportation planning is hitting the streets this winter with our Be Safe + Be Seen campaign to encourage Vancouverites to be mindful and safe when traveling around our city streets whether you are walking, biking, rolling, or driving. During the dark times of the day and wet weather, visibility is limited and changing road conditions make it harder to see each other.

We were at the 2018 Homeless Count event at Oppenheimer Park handing out Visibility Information Packages which include reflective stickers

great for wheelchairs, walkers, canes, and other mobility aids. For more on Be Safe + Be Seen visit: <http://vancouver.ca/streets-transportation/visibility-safety-tips.aspx>



Arts & Culture Opportunities

City Investments in Local Arts Organizations

At the end of January, City Council approved operating and annual assistance cultural grants to 124 organizations. Among the non-profit arts and culture organizations approved for this stable and ongoing City support were 36 DTES-based organizations receiving a total \$830,500 for 2018. To read the full Council Report, go here: <http://council.vancouver.ca/20180131/documents/cfsc2.pdf>



Creative City Strategy Launched

What are Vancouver's arts, culture, and creative priorities? Cultural Services staff are embarking on an extensive public engagement period to develop a comprehensive plan and vision for art, culture and creativity in Vancouver. The strategy will include previously under-represented voices and communities, including the DTES. Learn more about the Creative City Strategy here: <http://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/creative-city-strategy.aspx>

Community Arts Grants Deadline

The City's Community Arts grant program supports a wide variety of arts and cultural activities celebrating Vancouver's diverse communities. Non-profit societies with projects that increase public participation and engagement in arts and culture, recognize and strengthen the role of artists in our communities, activate our neighbourhoods and public spaces, and strengthen community connections are eligible. More information and guidelines can be found here: <http://vancouver.ca/people-programs/community-arts-grant-program.aspx>

Celebrate Heritage

Heritage Action Plan

Heritage includes not only buildings and historic areas but the intangible aspects of cultural and social life that are important to people in the DTES and contribute to community identity and sense of place. The current and last initiative under the City's Heritage Action Plan is developing a Heritage Strategy to guide the management of change to historic places that matter for their Indigenous, spiritual, cultural, architectural, and social value as well as the integration of heritage with new design, public art, and cultural events and activities. Staff work on completion of the Heritage Strategy is well underway and updates are coming soon on the web page: vancouver.ca/heritageactionplan

Parks & Open Space

VanPlay: Vancouver's Park Master Plan

The Vancouver Park Board continues to develop *Vancouver's Playbook*, a guide to how we create vibrant parks and recreation over the next 25 years. The Park Board expects to release the final plan this summer. Learn more at: vancouver.ca/vanplay

Community Place-making

DTES Capital Matching Grant

The Planning Department is accepting applications to its 2018 DTES Capital Matching Grant Program until the end of March. We are looking for capital projects in the DTES that will support the implementation the DTES Plan through key priority areas such as supporting community-based initiatives, fostering community economic development, protecting community assets, and improving the walkability and safety of the neighbourhood. Applicants need to be Vancouver-based non-profit organizations or social enterprises and should share 50% of the project cost. For more information, please see our website: vancouver.ca/dtesplan

Chinatown Legacy Business Study

In December, we hosted a community forum to share the results of our consultant report on legacy businesses in Chinatown. We heard that legacy businesses are cherished because they are local, affordable, and cultural—and that we love Chinatown's food stores! We also received over 1,500 responses to our Talk



Vancouver online survey, which showed agreement with study findings. Staff are now looking at what next steps can be taken to support legacy businesses and will be providing the community with an update in the spring. For more information, please visit: vancouver.ca/legacy-business.

Well-Managed Built Form

Chinatown Development Policy

We are still presenting to Council proposed changes to development policies to ensure that new buildings in Chinatown better fit the character of the area. Council is expected to refer these proposed zoning changes to a public hearing this summer. You are welcome to share your thoughts with Council at the public hearing. To learn more, please visit: vancouver.ca/chinatown

Projects Near the DTES

Northeast False Creek Update

On Feb. 13, Vancouver City Council approved the Northeast False Creek Plan, making a historic decision on the shape that the neighbourhood will take in the years to come.

The Plan will guide one of the most significant deliveries of affordable homes in British Columbia's history, reconnect Chinatown and Hogan's Alley to the rest of the downtown through a new and improved street network, and provide Vancouver's largest increase in new and renewed parks and open space in a generation.

City staff will continue conversations with residents and community leaders on details required for implementing the vision of the plan as we move through the future phases.

Learn more and view the final plan at: vancouver.ca/necf

Gastown Complete Streets

We have been talking to residents, visitors, local businesses, and community stakeholders about their current experience of Gastown's streets and what they'd like to see in the future.

We heard from over 2,500 people about their love for Gastown's unique feel and character, and enthusiasm to see its streets become even better for people with less traffic in the area.

In 2018, we will be working closely with community stakeholders and the public to explore, develop, and evaluate different options for the transportation network in Gastown.

A consultation summary of what we heard will be available soon at: vancouver.ca/Gastown

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Phone 3-1-1,
vancouver.ca/dtes
dtes@vancouver.ca