

From: **"Mochrie, Paul"**

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 2024-05-10 12:05:48 PM

Subject: Upcoming news release: City waives patio fees and supports Gastown BIA's parking initiative for Water Street Pedestrian Zone (May 10, 2024)

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Following your approval at this week's Council meeting, I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below news release regarding the Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot (waiving of patio fees and support for the Gastown BIA parking initiative), to continue to build momentum toward the pilot launch.

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

Best,  
Paul

**Paul Mochrie** (he/him)  
City Manager  
City of Vancouver



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

**City of Vancouver**  
**News release**  
**May 10, 2024**

## **City waives patio fees and supports Gastown BIA's parking initiative for Water Street Pedestrian Zone**

Excitement for the upcoming Water Street Pedestrian Zone Pilot, this July and August, is building and support for businesses is expanding. This week, Council voted to waive fees for the new and expanded patios and merchandise displays participating in the pedestrian zone pilot and contribute \$20,000 towards the Gastown Business Improvement Society's parking initiative, which will offer visitors three hours of free parking once a week during the pilot.

"This July and August, we're transforming Water Street into a vibrant pedestrian zone and I couldn't be more excited," says Mayor Ken Sim. "It's important to me and this Council that we support our local businesses, be it waiving patio fees or supplementing free parking. We're testing new and unique people-first initiatives here in one of Vancouver's most iconic neighbourhoods and we're determined to make it a success for all."

In the Water Street Pedestrian Zone, roads and public space will be converted into lively and inclusive spaces that prioritize walking, local businesses, culture, community-building, biking and rolling.

The pedestrian zone will have plenty of public seating, expanded patios, art and storytelling courtesy of the Skwx̓w̓mesh (Squamish Nation) and the səliiwətał (Tseil-Waututh Nation) Nations, vending and community activations.

“We are working closely with the Gastown BIA and individual businesses to ensure they are supported throughout the pilot,” says Lisa Parker, Director of Public Space and Street Use. “We have unlocked a variety of business uses for the pedestrian zone, including expanded patios, live music and performances, merchandise displays and vending. The pilot will be closely monitored by staff and learnings will inform future programs and city-wide changes to the public realm. It’s going to be a vibrant, community-oriented space – we’re so excited to welcome folks to the Water Street Pedestrian Zone this July.”

We appreciate everyone’s patience and understanding as the City completes the road repairs.

### **Traffic Changes and Parking**

During the Pedestrian Zone Pilot, sections of Water Street and Maple Tree Square will be closed to vehicles to allow visitors a safe and enjoyable environment to soak up the neighbourhood, take in performances, shop, people watch and dine in the heart of Gastown.

In designated "Car-Free" blocks, vehicle access will be restricted. However, local access will be maintained on all "Car-Light" blocks to provide access to the area for deliveries, visitors, and customers. View a map of the traffic changes [here](#).

For more information on all Gastown related projects, or to sign-up for project updates, visit [vancouver.ca/gastown](http://vancouver.ca/gastown).

Stay tuned for more updates. This summer, we look forward to walking with you on Water Street!

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