



REPORT

Report Date: January 12, 2021
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RTS No.: 14272
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: February 24, 2021
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TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services

FROM: General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services and
General Manager of Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Public Consumption of Alcohol in Proposed Parklet at 111 Princess Avenue

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to designate an additional public place as a place where liquor may be consumed, and to establish the dates and times during which liquor may be consumed in that designated area;
- FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to bring forward for enactment by Council a By-law to amend the City Land Regulation By-law to designate this additional public place, and to establish the dates and times during which liquor may be consumed in that designated area, generally as set out in Appendix A of this report.
- B. THAT Mayor and Council write a letter to the Province to request ongoing Provincial funding for the Drinker's Lounge, including the extension of outreach and program services required in the context of dual public health emergencies, and to ask the Province to explore the allocation of a percentage of the provincial liquor sales tax dollar to managed alcohol programs.
- C. THAT Council approve one (1) grant totalling \$25,000 to the PHS Community Services Society toward expansion of services for a Community Managed Alcohol Program (CMAP) at the Drinkers Lounge to staff the temporary Parklet ('Parklet') at 111 Princess Avenue. Source of funding is the 2021 Social Policy Grants Operating Budget.

- D. THAT, pursuant to Section 206(1)(j) of the *Vancouver Charter*, Council deems any organization that is to receive a grant pursuant to the above recommendations, which is not a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency, to be an organization contributing to the health or welfare of the City;

FURTHER THAT Council authorize the General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services to negotiate and execute agreements to disperse the grants described in Recommendation C on the terms and conditions set out herein or such other terms and conditions as are satisfactory to the General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services and the Director of Legal Services;

AND FURTHER THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of Recommendation C unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

Approval of Recommendation C requires 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members per Section 206 (1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

REPORT SUMMARY

In the context of public health restrictions due to COVID-19, outdoor gatherings spaces are important to allow local residents to socialize and look out for each other's safety. This report recommends an operational grant and a By-law amendment to allow a supported management alcohol program at a temporary Parklet (Parklet) in front of the Drinker's Lounge, a community-based alcohol management and harm reduction program operated by the Portland Hotel Society (PHS), at 111 Princess Avenue.

A By-law amendment is required to allow safe and legal consumption of alcohol at the Parklet within the City's road right-of-way. As well, a Social Policy grant would provide additional required operational funding. If approved by Council, the Parklet would be in operation from March 1, 2021, to July 31, 2021. The By-Law amendment for this temporary use is aligned with the previous Council approval of a By-law amendment to City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to temporarily allow public consumption of alcohol in four plazas in Vancouver. That pilot provided an opportunity to support local businesses and communities in rebuilding and reconnecting after social and economic disruption due to COVID-19. The plaza pilot was led by Engineering Services with input from Arts, Culture and Community Services (ACCS), Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), and was successful in its intention, with no reported issues related to safety. Staff will report back to Council on the full implementation later this Spring, and that report will include an update on this specific Parklet implementation at 111 Princess Avenue, if approved by Council.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

In July 2020, Council approved a motion to support the decriminalization of poverty and community-led safety initiatives by working with the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) and external partners to prioritize community-led harm reduction and safety initiatives in the areas of mental health, homelessness, drug use and sex work.

In July 2020, Council approved a temporary pilot to designate certain public places over which the City has jurisdiction as places where liquor may be consumed.

In October 2020, Council approved a grant of \$50,000 from the DTES Plan Implementation Grants (RTS 13784) for service delivery and programming to address community concerns over the public consumption of alcohol in the 700/800 block of East Hastings, specifically outside the bus stop in front of the Astoria Hotel.

In November 2020, Council approved a motion for Mayor to request a federal exemption from the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act to decriminalize personal possession of illicit substances within the City's boundaries for medical purposes, in order to address urgent public health concerns caused by the overdose crisis and COVID-19.

In December 2018, Council approved over 30 recommendations in the Mayor's Overdose Emergency Task Force Report, including immediate actions in the areas of Indigenous healing and wellness, peer networks, harm reduction, safe supply, treatment, low barrier employment, and collective action for change.

In 2019, an Equity Framework (in progress), was initiated to guide the City's work in addressing systemic causes of the growing racial, gender, social and economic inequities across the city that impact individual and community-level health and well-being.

In 2014, Council approved the City of Reconciliation Framework, which promotes the inclusion of First Nations and Urban Indigenous perspectives in our work and decisions for effective service provision. Indigenous peoples are disproportionately affected by health issues related to substance use due to the impacts of colonization, intergenerational trauma from colonial policies such as the legacy of Residential Schools, Indian Hospitals and the Sixties Scoop and ongoing systemic racism in health and social services.

In 2014, Council approved the Healthy City Strategy (2014-2025), Vancouver's overall social sustainability plan, in its attention to health promotion and creating safer city spaces that support being and feeling safe and included.

In 2001, Council approved The Four Pillars Strategy, a model that continues to guide the City's work in mental health and substance use and includes a harm reduction approach to all substances including drugs and alcohol.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The Acting City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing. The proposed by-law amendment to allow for public drinking at the Parklet at 111 Princess Avenue will significantly support residents living in poverty who otherwise are without a culturally safe and legal community space for alcohol consumption. The proposed operating grant will support program delivery of the managed alcohol program in the Parklet.

REPORT

Background/Context

Public Consumption of Alcohol Pilot, Summer 2020

In summer of 2020, as a part of the City of Vancouver's efforts to support the community with a variety of innovative new public spaces, the City undertook an Alcohol Consumption in Public Spaces pilot in response to Council's motion to pilot the public consumption of alcohol in designated public spaces in response to the pandemic. In partnership with BIAs, VPD and VCH, the initial pilot ran from August 10 to October 12, 2020 in four plazas across the city. The goals were to support businesses during a time of reduced capacity and to provide additional spaces to socialize for those who may not have access to private outdoor spaces. Engineering Services are currently evaluating the pilot and preliminary findings indicate that the pilot was a success in that: residents enjoyed the spaces; the spaces fostered community connections during a pandemic; the spaces supported local businesses; and the spaces did not result in additional issues related to safety or a need for increased surveillance or emergency response. Engineering staff will report back to Council with a detailed review of the 2020 pilot and potential next steps later this Spring, and this Parklet pilot will be included in the report back. The summer 2020 pilot coincided with a similar direction by the Park Board to explore a pilot allowing alcohol consumption in select park spaces around the city, proposed to be carried out in summer of 2021.

Public Drinking in Front of the Astoria

For many years, people have been drinking at the bus stop in front of the Astoria due to a lack of low-cost, low-barrier, safe spaces to gather outside and drink. The people who drink at the bus stop are generally either experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed and are at risk for alcohol and substance-used related harms. They require safe public spaces to drink as well as access to non-illicit alcohol. Some of the key harms impacting this population of drinkers include: injuries such as traumatic brain injury from falls; being hit by passing vehicles from stumbling onto the road; violence and harassment from other residents; charges or fines related to drinking illegally; and death from exposure or overdose when drinking alone outside and/or using in combination with other substances.

In addition to the harms and risks to these community members, public concerns have been raised about the public consumption of alcohol in the 700/800 block of East Hastings, specifically outside the bus stop in front of the Astoria Hotel. COVID-19 has further exacerbated social isolation and access to already limited outdoor and indoor locations for safer consumption of alcohol and other substances. Community residents and businesses in Strathcona have noted increasing numbers of people arriving in the area to access the Astoria Liquor store from early hours of the morning until late at night during COVID.

Strategic Analysis

Harm Reduction Approach to Substance Use

The City's long-standing Four Pillars Strategy articulates a harm reduction approach to all substances, both drugs and alcohol, seeking to support people who are using substances in ways that prevent further harms.

In ongoing efforts to advance this approach, the City works in collaboration with Vancouver Coastal Health, VPD, non-profit partners and people with lived experience as part of the Vancouver Community Action Team (CAT) to address ongoing issues related to the overdose crisis, including harm reduction approaches to drugs and alcohol. The 2018 Mayor's Overdose Emergency Task Force further reinforced a harm reduction approach to substance use and has also advocated to senior government partners to fund the Drinker's Lounge.

Unlike other forms of illicit drugs, alcohol is legal and regulated so it is often overlooked in harm reduction conversations; however, an alcohol harm reduction lens is critical to support this community of at-risk substance users. It is also important to note that many people who access managed consumption programs such as the Drinker's Lounge consume a range of different substances in addition to alcohol, including illegal drugs poisoned with fentanyl and other contaminants. Linking people to much needed support services is critical as part of a dual public health emergency response.

City staff are also involved in the development of an Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy in Vancouver led by a peer advocacy group with VANDU called Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE). The Alcohol Strategy group is comprised of various partners across Vancouver who are involved in or have an interest in alcohol harm reduction, including representatives from non-profit organizations, research institutions/universities, drug and alcohol user groups, Indigenous community groups, and health organizations, including VCH, BCCDC and FNHA, and the City of Vancouver. City staff keep the Alcohol Strategy group apprised of the alcohol-related policy issues in the City. Some of the key learnings from this group have included the importance of involving people who use alcohol in the development of alcohol-related policy, with the recognition that historically in Vancouver this has been lacking. For example, information from this Alcohol Strategy group informed the development of the alcohol consumption in public spaces pilot. The Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy group also suggested that having places where public drinking can occur in the DTES would be an asset and contribute to decriminalization of people who use alcohol and who are alcohol dependent.

Working with Community Toward a Solution

Consistent with City policy on harm reduction, City staff from Social Policy, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability and Engineering Services are proposing a harm reduction approach to the COVID challenges facing the community of drinkers in the DTES. Partnership with local organizations such as the BIA and alcohol harm reduction groups could serve as a best practice model for planning a safer alternative for local residents who drink during the day.

A Steering Committee led by City staff was formed to guide the initiative, which included partners from Strathcona BIA, VCH, PHS and staff from the Drinker's Lounge, VANDU and people with lived experience, the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House (DTES), and First Nations Health Authority (FNHA). The Steering Committee has been meeting bi-weekly since summer 2020 to discuss the issue from diverse perspectives, gather data and information, identify potential solutions and risks, and create a plan for action.

Staff also collaborated with VANDU and Drinker's Lounge to consult with drinkers on this issue to ensure their perspectives informed potential solutions. An engagement session was held in November 2020 at VANDU with 23 people in attendance, including 10 people who reported drinking at the Astoria. Members from Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE) and Drinker's Lounge also participated in meetings with staff including Steering Committee meetings. During these engagements, drinkers have provided the following feedback:

- Drinkers would prefer to drink somewhere other than the bus stop
- Drinkers at the bus stop are often ticketed or have their drinks poured out by police
- Drinkers use the bus stop to be with their friends and they can look out for each other
- Drinkers would be interested in a safe place with activities and programming
- Some drinkers did not know about the Lounge and said they would access it
- Some felt that there was more drinking at the bus stop outside of Drinker's Lounge hours
- Due to the lack of washrooms near the bus stop people tend to use the alleys;
- Drinkers would prefer to use a space that is open from 9am to 6pm every day.

PHS staff have also been connecting with drinkers at the bus stops and building relationships, sharing information about the Drinker's Lounge, and gathering information on what people want to see in a safe space to drink.

Proposed Solution: Endorsed Supported Outdoor Drinking Spaces in the DTES

The proposed solution involves two main actions:

1. Immediate action: Installing a temporary Parklet in front of the Drinker's Lounge, a community-based alcohol management and harm reduction program in the DTES operated by PHS at 111 Princess Avenue for the duration of COVID. (*Subject of this report*)
2. Ongoing review: Searching for a more permanent space closer to the Astoria for a supported outdoor drinking location, subject to evaluation of action 1. (*Subject to future discussion*)

The implementation of the immediate action to install a temporary Parklet requires two Council decisions:

1. A By-law amendment to allow safe and legal consumption of alcohol at the Parklet within the City's road right-of-way; and
2. A Social Policy grant of \$25,000 to PHS to support operations of the Parklet.

If approved by Council, the temporary Parklet would run from March 1 to July 31, 2021. The City will fund the installation of the Parklet through existing Engineering programs and will extend the PHS Community Managed Alcohol Program (CMAP) through the Drinker's Lounge. The increase of service for the first 5 months of the support services (May-July) will be funded through City social grants, while working with partners to advocate for the long term funding required to address ongoing public health issues. If additional funds are secured, staff can bring an extension to this Parklet activation Council's consideration with the overall public alcohol consumption pilot update later this Spring.

In addition to harm reduction, this proposed implementation aligns with the other three pillars: prevention, treatment and community safety. With the Parklet connected to Drinker's Lounge, drinkers will have increased access to services, including opportunities for treatment if desired and creates a supervised space that will support safe interactions.

Subsequent phases of the project would include exploring the potential for a permanent space for drinkers closer to the bus stop in front of the Astoria and seeking ongoing funding for the continuation of the Drinker's Lounge.

Temporary Parklet Details: Location, Stewardship and Monitoring Approach

1) *Location*

Staff worked with PHS, DTES Neighbourhood House and the SBIA to identify the location of the temporary Parklet at 111 Princess Avenue. This location was chosen for three reasons:

- It is directly in front of the Drinker's Lounge where there is already a need for additional space for current members of the alcohol harm reduction program due to COVID space restrictions;
- PHS staff can easily support and manage the space, including providing access to washrooms and taking the furniture in and out at the end of the day; and
- The location is within walking distance of the bus stop in front of the Astoria where people drink during the day and are able to access affordable alcohol in lieu of illicit non-beverage alcohol that is more harmful to consume such as mouthwash or rubbing alcohol. (See Map attached to the amending by-law in Appendix A).

The City would provide the temporary infrastructure, including table, chairs and umbrellas that could be taken in and out at the end of the day by PHS. The SBIA has also indicated that they might be able to fund small improvements to the space as well.

To allow drinkers to safely and legally consume alcohol at the proposed Parklet within the City's road right-of-way, a by-law amendment is required to allow public consumption of alcohol at this site.

2) *Stewardship Approach and Hours of Operation*

Staff propose to engage PHS to steward the Parklet and manage alcohol consumption in this location. Public consumption in the Parklet would only be permitted during the Drinker's Lounge hours of operation (See Appendix A for proposed extension of hours of service from 5 hours/day (10 AM to 3 PM) to 8 hours/day (9 AM to 5 PM)). After hours, PHS staff will remove the furniture from the Parklet and bring it indoors so seating will no longer be available.

PHS would be responsible for supporting and monitoring the Parklet and would include:

- Providing access to washroom facilities at the Drinker's Lounge during hours when public alcohol consumption is permitted;
- Furniture management, including peer employment opportunities for set up and take down;
- Clean up, including safely disposing of discarded needles or other garbage and debris;
- Support for people drinking in the space from a harm reduction perspective, and managing day-to-day issues that might arise;
- Cultural safe programming and peer outreach (including with Astoria); and
- Monitoring how the space is working and providing timely feedback to staff.

3) *Monitoring and Assessment*

Staff will work with PHS and VANDU to engage drinkers and get their perspectives on the effectiveness of the Parklet, as well as provide evaluative feedback. To determine the success of the activation, staff will rely on the following assessment criteria:

- Reports from the PHS staff on use of the space by drinkers;
- Support needed from VPD in response to any incidents; and
- Feedback received from other partners, including the SBIA and nearby residents, agencies and businesses.

Funding Source

Subject to Council approval, the Parklet infrastructure will be delivered through existing public space funding within Engineering.

At the outset of this work, Social Policy engaged PHS to undertake community engagement, including paying peer workers to do outreach to the drinkers at the bus stop and invite them to come to the Drinker's Lounge.

On October 21, Council approved \$50,000 from the DTES Plan Implementation Grant Allocation (RTS No. 13784) to support this project. These funds will be used to support the delivery of services and programming to people with Alcohol Use Disorder or who may consume non-beverage alcohol at the Parklet, including program resources, PHS staffing and peer worker outreach aimed to connect the Astoria drinkers with the Drinker's Lounge. The project currently has enough funding for 3 months of operations, and with the additional requested \$25,000 one-time grant from Social Policy, PHS would be able to operate the Parklet for 5 months while additional fundraising efforts are underway. (See Appendix C for PHS Operational Plan).

PHS is seeking ongoing funding for the Drinker's Lounge as operating managed alcohol programs are complex and require ongoing funding. Staff are working with partners to find a long-term funding solution, described below in the section on Financial implications.

Anticipated Benefits

There are numerous anticipated benefits and outcomes of this proposed approach:

- 1) Benefits to DTES Drinkers and Residents – address issues of isolation, increase employment opportunities for peer workers, anticipated reduction in street activity and the need for surveillance related to public drinking and loitering, reduction in harassment targeted towards drinkers.
- 2) Benefits to Businesses – fewer issues related to harassment of DTES business employees, building and strengthening relationships between businesses and residents, and increasing opportunities for more positive community relations as well as social responsibility.
- 3) Harm Reduction and Health Inequities – reduce criminalization and further stigma of drinkers, reduce negative health impacts from drinking in safe places, increase access to supports and services, increase opportunities to address issues related to racialized or gender-based violence.

Public/Civic Agency Input

Staff have engaged a number of partners in conversations about this Parklet as a space where drinkers can consume alcohol. All partners are supportive and committed to working with the City as this project progresses. Each of the partners and their respective commitments to the project are outlined below:

- *Vancouver Coastal Health* – supportive of a harm reduction approach and need for a safe place for drinkers in the DTES, especially in the context of COVID-19;
- *Portland Hotel Society* – committed to working with drinkers and local businesses to address any alcohol-related issues that might arise, keen to invite drinkers to the Drinker's Lounge and share information about services, committed to ongoing outreach and gathering of information from drinkers at the Astoria bus stop;
- *DTES Neighbourhood House* – committed to exploring partnerships and increasing drinker's access to relevant programming, such as the community garden project or the Aboriginal Dads program;
- *Strathcona BIA* – committed to providing additional funding to support an outdoor space for drinkers and to sharing information on progress of the project with SBIA members;
- *VPD* – committed to working with the City and emphasize the importance of the management of this temporary location;
- *VANDU* – committed to engaging drinkers to provide input and/or feedback on the project as well as share information about the Parklet;
- *FNHA* – committed to participating in meetings and sharing information as needed.

As already noted above, an engagement session with drinkers was held at VANDU in November 2020. Drinkers provided insight on why people drink at the bus stop and what they would like to see in a safe space for drinkers.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

Financial

The operation of the Parklet will depend on continued funding of the Drinker's Lounge. Currently, funding has been secured for initiation in March to May 2021 through a \$50K grant from the DTES Plan Implementation Grant Allocation (RTS 13784). Staff are recommending a \$25K additional Social Policy Direct Services Grant (March 9, 2021) to expand the project through to July 2021.

Staff have developed a fundraising strategy and plan to secure sustainable Drinker's Lounge funding in partnership with VCH, SBIA and PHS. This strategy seeks to secure sustainable funding for the Drinker's Lounge, including applying for provincial funding, applying for grants with organizations such as Vancouver Foundation and Community Action Initiative, seeking partnerships with local breweries and businesses, partnering with researchers and applying for research dollars, and seeking and partnering with Indigenous organizations (e.g. FNHA). VCH and FNHS are also working to provide funding to the Drinker's Lounge.

In summary, there is currently sufficient secured funding to operate the Parklet for three months. If Council approves staff recommendation to provide the one-time grant of \$25K (Source: Social Policy Direct Services Grant), the Parklet will be able to operate to July 31, 2021. If additional

funds are secured beyond the above, staff will bring to Council a proposed extension to the Parklet with the overall report back on the summer 2020 pilot for consideration.

Other

Drinkers may continue to drink at the bus stop due to preference or convenience despite the installation of the Parklet. To promote use of the Parklet as an alternative space, PHS staff and peer outreach workers will connect with drinkers at the Astoria to inform them about the Parklet and encourage them to attend. The Steering Committee will also continue to work on the next phases of the project, including finding a more permanent location for drinkers to spend time during the day. Currently staff are exploring the possibility of implementing a washroom trailer near the Astoria, creating additional services such as access to washrooms as well as peer outreach, harm reduction, overdose response and connection to services.

CONCLUSION

Based on the urgent need for a safe place for drinkers in the DTES and the recommendations from the Steering Committee on this project, staff and partners are supportive of the creation of a temporary Parklet at 111 Princess Avenue in front of the Drinker's Lounge. Risks have been identified and strategies to mitigate are in place, as described above. Staff and partners do not anticipate increase issues or harms due to this project, rather several benefits to drinkers, community members and businesses are expected outcomes. To move ahead with the installation of the Parklet, a by-law amendment to allow public drinking at the Parklet is required.

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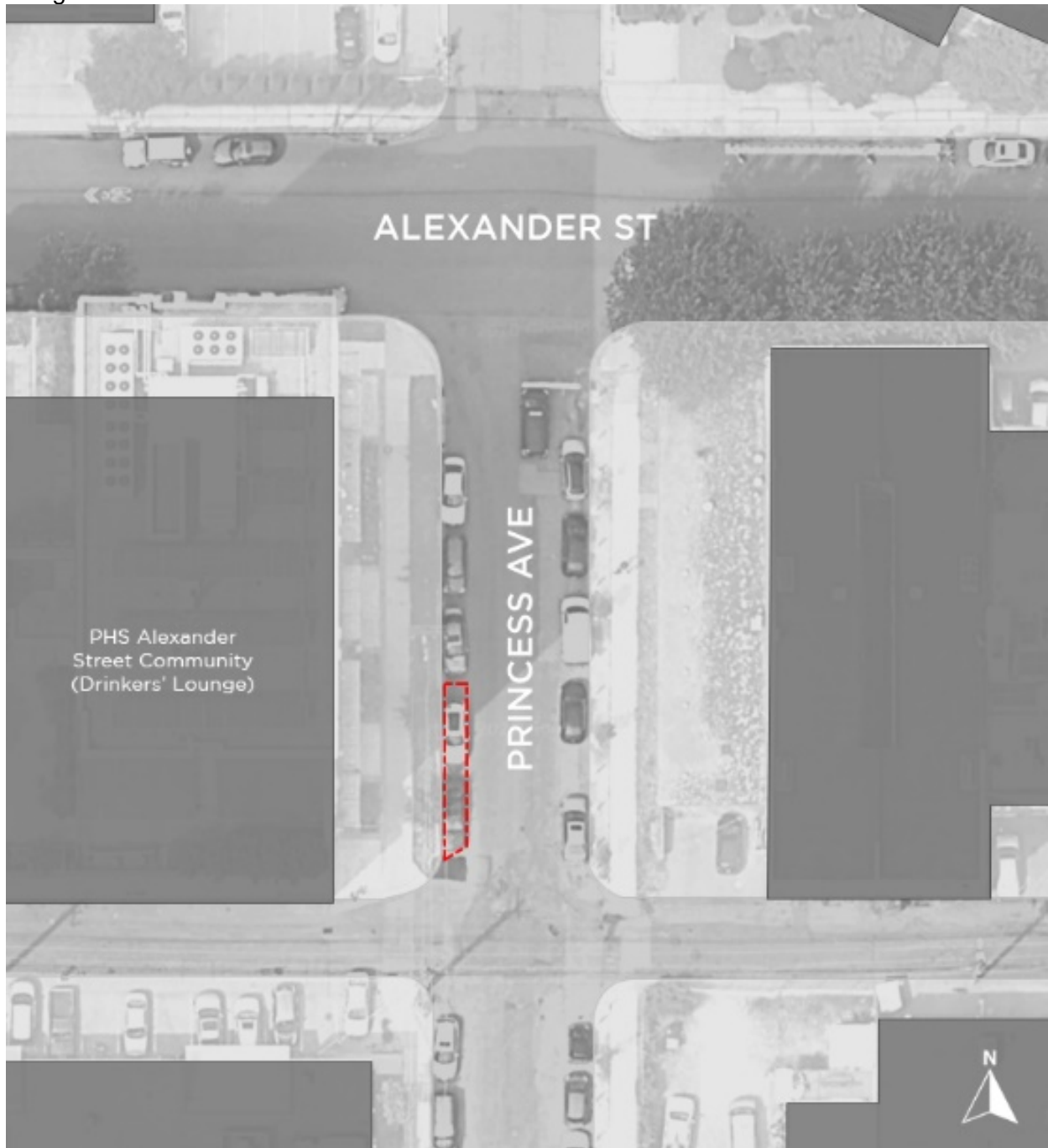
**APPENDIX A: DRAFT By-law to amend the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735
Regarding Consumption of Liquor on City Land**

Note: A By-law will be prepared generally in accordance with the provisions listed below, subject to change and refinement prior to posting.

1. This By-law amends the indicated provisions of the City Land Regulation By-law.
2. In section 4C, Council:
 - (a) in subsection (b), adds “in designated areas 1 through 4 as identified in Schedule 1, and Monday to Friday between March 1, 2021 and July 31, 2021 in designated area 5 as identified in Schedule 1” after “between August 10, 2020 and October 12, 2020”; and
 - (b) in subsection (c), adds “, and in designated area 5 as identified in Schedule 1, liquor may only be consumed between the hours of 9:00am and 5:00pm” after “except that in designated area 4 as identified in Schedule 1, liquor may only be consumed between the hours of 12:00pm and 9:00pm”.
3. Council amends Schedule 1 by adding the map in the form attached to this by law as Schedule A after the map labelled “Designated area 4”.

SCHEDULE A

Designated area 5



APPENDIX B:

This document is being provided for information only as a reference tool to highlight the proposed amendments. The draft amending by-laws attached to Council report RTS No. 14272 entitled Public Consumption of Alcohol in Proposed Parklet at 111 Princess Ave represent the amendments being proposed to Council for approval. Should there be any discrepancy between this redline version and the draft amending by-laws, the draft amending by-laws prevail.

Proposed amendments to City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735:

- 4B. The city land or parts thereof listed in Schedule 1 of this by-law, the boundaries of which will be identified by signs posted in accordance with this by-law, are hereby designated as places where liquor may be consumed.

- 4C. Liquor may be consumed on city land:
 - a) in those areas designated as places where liquor may be consumed under section 4B of this by-law;
 - b) between August 10, 2020 and October 12, 2020 in designated areas 1 through 4 as identified in Schedule 1, and Monday to Friday between March 1, 2021 and July 31, 2021 in designated area 5 as identified in Schedule 1; and
 - c) between the hours of 11:00am and 9:00pm, except that in designated area 4 as identified in Schedule 1, liquor may only be consumed between the hours of 12:00pm and 9:00pm, and in designated area 5 as identified in Schedule 1, liquor may only be consumed between the hours of 9:00am and 5:00pm.

January 22, 2021

Drinker's Lounge – Parklet/Outreach Operations Plan

PHS *Community* Managed Alcohol Program (CMAP)

The PHS CMAP strives, first and foremost, to provide a culturally safe and legal community space for people who have a severe alcohol use disorder; who live in abject poverty, and who sometimes drink non-beverage alcohol products such as mouthwash or rubbing alcohol.

Many of the CMAP members are homeless or living in unstable housing. Those that do have housing may not be allowed guests; living spaces are typically very small. These conditions mean that for this population social drinking becomes an illicit issue simply because it often occurs on public property: parks, sidewalks and empty lots. In contrast, CMAP creates a licit setting with oversight (health and social support) and community. This high-risk population of drinkers are predominantly indigenous community members and suffer loss of health and spiritual wellbeing. CMAP has a strong cultural component supported by our Culture Saves Lives program as well as connections to Elder programming.

Consuming non-beverage alcohol as a result of severe addiction profoundly destabilizes a person's life, increasing the likelihood of homelessness, stigmatization, violence, police interactions, emergency trips to the hospital, and eventually mortality. Many of those with severe alcohol use disorder are polysubstance users and are at increasing risk for overdose and death. Across Canada, Managed Alcohol Programs (MAPs) demonstrate increased quality of life, decreased violence and police interaction and decreased visits to the emergency room.

Importantly, the unique difference between CMAP and other MAPs is the central role that the members (drinkers) play in determining the program's focus – thus the Community in front of MAP. CMAP has operated both a cost sharing model (members contribute to purchasing the ingredients to brew beverages) called the Brewer's Coop, and an artisan program where members learn to sanitize (maintain), brew and bottle the monthly volumes of beer and wine created.

CMAP has a core of drinker's who come daily to socialize and imbibe at our 111 Princess Ave. location. Staff and Peers engage in an outreach effort to connect with members of the DTES community who drink illicitly; connecting them to the socialization and service components of the CMAP program. CMAP also delivers beverages to residents in social housing – this has been especially important during COVID to encourage residents to minimize interactions.

CMAP members are connected to additional supports such as cultural medicine, health services and Ministry programs. Finally, CMAP is very successful at motivating drinkers to switch from non-beverage alcohol options (e.g. hand sanitizer, rubbing alcohol) to beverage alcohol. Members can exchange non-beverage alcohol for brewed wine and beer. Our PHS physician provides oversight and regularly meets with CMAP members with the objective to provide client-centred care while reducing the harms of daily alcohol consumption.

CMAP Core Funding

CMAP core funding is made up of one time only grants from Vancouver Coastal Health and, more recently, First Nations Health Authority. This funding is not secure and must be applied for annually. Our funders recognize the value of the program and work hard to secure funding each year. This seriously limits PHS's ability to plan and make commitments beyond each fiscal calendar.

Note: Currently CMAP is at overcapacity; this is reflective of both the demand for service and also the limited and year-by-year funding model. CMAP has 135 members and a regular cohort of about 40 people who actively participate in the brewing, social and cultural aspects of the program. On a daily basis we have approximately 15 people socially gathering. This number is anticipated to grow with outreach to the Hastings area. We have a waiting list for new members and require funding for staff, peer honourarium and program supplies.

CMAP at the Alexander St. Community building (111 Princess St.)

CMAP operates weekdays – Monday to Friday (10am – 3pm)

- Sustainability & Partnerships – Meeting Current & Ongoing Demand for Managed Alcohol Programs

CMAP is an extremely low barrier program that meets the needs of street entrenched alcohol drinkers. This population has a very high rate of mortality – memorials for members of CMAP are an all too common event. The current gaps in services for this population is housing aimed at this population as well as day programming to address issues such as grief and loss.

Potential partnerships are many:

- Health Authority funding as multi-year core funding aimed at alcohol and indigenous needs (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions)
- Housing Authority funding to address the need for Indigenous-focused housing that is authentically low-barrier
- Provincial funding attached to alcohol (Sin) taxes
- Partnerships with the artisanal brewery industry – these partnerships could focus on both beverage donations, financial support donations, as well as mentoring opportunity for the Brew Masters of CMAP to learn from the artisanal brewers
- Federal Ministry of Indigenous Services – this is especially pertinent to CMAP as the DTES is home to indigenous folks from every region of Canada
- Assembly of First Nations – for the same reasons as Indigenous Services.
 - In both cases, with directed funding, CMAP would like to produce a detailed outline on how to create CMAP programs for other jurisdictions. We receive regular inquiries from both on-reserve and off-reserve organizations
- Research partnerships – important piece to produce a detailed model as above
- Clinic partnerships to provide wrap around health care

CMAP Parklet Expansion & Description: 5 months (~March - July)

The CMAP Parklet Expansion would see PHS extend the program's hours of service from

5 hours/day (10 AM to 3 PM) to 8 hours/day (9 AM to 5 PM)

- these hours better reflect the retail hours relevant to the Strathcona BIA

Budget

\$75,000 total (PHS budget breakdown in appendix):

City of Vancouver DTES Capital Grant (\$50K Approved) and Social Policy Grant (\$25K pending Council Approval March 9)

- \$75,000
 - \$45,500 salaries
 - \$22,000 for program supplies, Peer honouraria
 - \$7,500 Admin

Budget Breakdown

Impact on Service Access – CMAP will need additional staff capacity for new members

Staffing:

- Additional mental health worker (MHW – 1.2 FTE) to support both the extra Peer roles, the outreach to the Hastings corridor (Astoria), increased hours, and the anticipated increase to the CMAP membership as a result of the outreach efforts, and to ensure these members are supported.
- The CMAP Extension will strive to enhance the program's capacity for referral and connection to services (e.g. housing, Indigenous services, primary care). This role will fall primarily to the Program Manager (in-kind resource)

Peer Honouraria

- Stipends to peers operating the Brew Coop, the daily outreach roles and the set up/break-down of the Parklet furniture as well as daily site clean-up. Elder stipends to provide culturally appropriate support and connection for participants.

Program Supplies

- purchasing both brewing supplies, food, transportation
- Parklet outfitting (Note: Covered majority from ENG and SBIA)
- Outreach and the Incentives for Astoria Drinkers to join Drinkers' Lounge (such as vouchers for a canned beer)
 - PHS recognizes the need to create new relationships as well as habits for the drinkers that currently frequent the Astoria
 - Outreach from CMAP will offer vouchers and supports (incl. food) to migrate over to the Drinker's Lounge
 - Drinkers will learn that they can buy into the Brewer's Coop as well as work with the Coop to learn brewing
 - The Parklet will provide more room and shelter for people to gather – legally and with supports in place

Workplan/Activities

Staff and Peers will perform the following outreach and member activities 5 days/week.

- Outreach to Astoria Drinkers providing education and support and membership to the program
- Staff will provide an assessment of each individual needs and assist with resource coordination and connection to health care, housing, cultural medicine. Member services include:
 - Group workshops and cultural programming for members aimed at addressing the traumas associated with alcohol use
 - Health care such as wound care, nutrition and health monitoring
 - Physician oversight for establishing MAP care plan with members
- Peers roles include
 - set-up and take-down Parklet furniture
 - regular clean-up of Parklet
 - participate in brewing and alcohol exchange
 - support new members to access alcohol and services

Sustainability and Stewardship in Community

The CMAP Parklet Expansion will have as its long-term objective the aim to secure multi-year funding and the creation of a 7 day/week program model. The Astoria Steering Committee (Partnership & Fundraising Plan Implementation) will continue to assess and evaluate efforts and work towards sustainable funding objectives.

CMAP has operated continuously for over 10 years in the Oppenheimer neighbourhood. We recognize that the weekends - Saturday and Sunday, when the program cannot offer drinker's a place to gather legally and with supports - is the part of the week with the highest likelihood of members experiencing adverse events like violence, police interactions and hospitalization. PHS with our funders and partners continues to work towards efforts to secure long-term core funding and appreciates this opportunity to implement an outreach expansion in hopes of gaining further support for the community during weekend hours.

Astoria Drinker's will be connected to resources and services through Drinker's Lounge and have access for health and socialization activities as an outcome of this activation.