



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: March 28, 2023
Contact: Margaret Wittgens
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RTS No.: 15607
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: April 11, 2023
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager, Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Sites for 2023 Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Program

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to designate certain public places over which the City has jurisdiction as places where liquor may be consumed.
- B. 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 these places, generally as set out in Appendix A.

Purpose and Executive Summary

This report outlines seven plaza locations recommended for the 2023 Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Program. Based on requests from plaza partner stewards we will have two schedules this year: seasonal and year round.

This report also responds to a Council amendment to the report adopted by Council on March 30, 2022 *Alcohol Consumption in Plazas Policy*, which directed staff as follows:

FURTHER THAT Council ask staff to consult with VANDU and Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE) about their proposal for creating a peerstaffed outdoor drinking space in the DTES as a form of alcohol harm reduction (RTS 15125).

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

May 24, 2022: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow a pilot for liquor consumption in six public plazas from June 15 to October 10, 2022, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment.

March 30, 2022: Council approved the Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy and approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to extend the Drinker's Lounge pilot at 111 Princess to March 31, 2024, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment. Further, council directed staff to consult with VANDU and Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE) about their proposal for a peer-staffed outdoor drinking space in the Downtown Eastside as a form of alcohol harm reduction.

December 8, 2021: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to extend the Drinker's Lounge pilot at 111 Princess to March 31, 2022, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment.

July 6, 2021: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow a pilot for liquor consumption in three public plazas from July 15 to October 11, 2021, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment.

May 18, 2021: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow a pilot for liquor consumption in three public plazas from May 31 to October 11, 2021, and to extend the Drinker's Lounge pilot to 7 days a week until December 31, 2021, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment.

March 30, 2021: Council directed staff to revisit the 2020 alcohol consumption pilot to consider timely reactivation of last summer's pilot plazas, and add any new locations that might equitably support local food and drink services that cannot otherwise provide patio spaces, as well as safe social gathering for Vancouverites.

February 24, 2021: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow a pilot for liquor consumption at a proposed parklet at 111 Princess (Drinker's Lounge") from March 1 to July 31, 2021, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment. Council also approved a Social Policy grant totalling \$25,000 to the PHS Community Services Society to support the pilot, and directed staff to report back in Q2 2021 on the implementation and considerations for extension.

July 29, 2020: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow a pilot for liquor consumption in four public plazas, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment. Staff were also directed to report back in Q2 2021 on the feasibility of enabling licensed restaurants to allow patrons to consume an alcoholic beverage while waiting for a table adjacent to the food establishment.

June 23, 2020: Council directed staff to prepare a by-law pursuant to Section 73 subsections (2), (3) and (4) of the Liquor Control and Licensing Act, to allow a pilot for liquor consumption in select public places under jurisdiction of the City. Staff were directed to create limited spaces for responsible consumption of alcohol in public, and to consult with VPD, VCH, internal stakeholders, local Business Improvement Associations and businesses, to recommend appropriate locations and hours for consumption of alcohol in specified public spaces.

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

Previous Pilots

Directed by Council, staff piloted the Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Program to enable seasonal public alcohol consumption in public plazas in 2020 and 2021. In 2022 Council adopted the *Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy* based on positive public space monitoring, strong public support for the program (92% in a 2021 survey), reported benefits to community partners, and an absence of any health or safety issues observed or raised by stakeholders (VPD and VCH) in previous years. This Policy outlines a framework for the Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Program to operate, and the 2023 program follows this Policy's recommendations.

Proposed 2023 Locations

In early 2023, staff requested proposals from our plaza partners via an 'Expression of Interest' process. We received requests for seven sites, and we have reviewed them based on the criteria established in the Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas policy.

The ability to secure public access to washrooms was again a critical criterion of site viability. All of the proposed sites will have signage directing visitors to a nearby park bathroom, a publicly accessible business washroom, or to a portable washroom in the plaza or nearby managed by a community steward partner. Washroom service hours similarly, determine which hours residents can consume alcohol in the proposed plazas, with permissible hours adjusting to the seasonal hours of nearby parks bathrooms, business hours, and hours when community steward partners are able to lock and unlock portable washrooms.

In discussion with our community steward partners regarding the 2023 program, some expressed interest in allowing alcohol consumption in plazas for a full year program instead of the summer season only. Staff have no concerns with a full year program as long as it is done in accordance with the *Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy*, i.e. staff public space monitoring is similarly expanded, bathroom access is maintained, community steward partners are able to co-manage, etc.

Staff propose two program streams in 2023:

Recommended Sites:

Year round (May 15, 2023 to May 14, 2024):

- **Main & 21st Neighbourhood Plaza – *returning site***
Location West block of E 21st Ave. at Main St.
Partners: Coco et Olive café, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, residents – *returning partners*
Washroom access: Prince Edward Park Public Washroom (400 metres away)
- **Cambie & 17th Neighbourhood Plaza – *returning site***
Location: East block of W 17th Ave. at Cambie St.
Partner: Cambie Village Business Association (CVBA) – *returning partner*
Washroom access: on-site temporary portable washroom

- Cambie & 18th Neighbourhood Plaza – *new site*
Location: West block of W 18th Ave. at Cambie St.
Partner: Cambie Village Business Association (CVBA) – *returning partner*
Washroom access: via on-site temporary portable washroom at Cambie & 17th Plaza (370 metres away)
- Granville & 13th Neighbourhood Plaza – *returning site*
Location: West block of W 13th Ave. at Granville St.
Partner: South Granville Business Improvement Association (SGBIA) – *returning partner*
Washroom access: Granville Park Public Washroom (350 metres away)
- Granville & 14th Neighbourhood Plaza – *returning site*
Location: East block of W 14th Ave. at Granville St.
Partner: South Granville Business Improvement Association (SGBIA) – *returning partner*
Washroom access: Granville Park Public Washroom (260 metres away)
- Lot 19 – *returning site*
Location: 855 W Hastings St.
Partner: Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) – *returning partner*
Washroom access: public washrooms in nearby food courts

Seasonal (May 15 to October 16, 2023):

- Maple & 4th Neighbourhood Plaza – *returning site*
Location: South block of Maple St. at W 4th Ave.
Partner: Kitsilano West 4th Avenue Business Improvement Association – *returning partner*
Washroom access: on-site temporary portable washroom

See the draft by-law in Appendix A for maps of locations and designated areas at each plaza. The program's hours mirror the operating hours of the nearby washrooms, so they vary for year round plazas. From May 15 to October 16, 2023, the program is proposed to run from 11am to 9pm daily, and from October 17, 2023 to May 14, 2024 the program is proposed to run from 11am to 5pm daily.

Peer-staffed Outdoor Drinking Space in the Downtown Eastside

Following Council extension of the Drinker's Lounge pilot at 111 Princess to March 31, 2024, Council directed staff to consult with VANDU and Eastside Illicit Drinkers Group for Education (EIDGE) about their proposal for a peer-staffed outdoor drinking space in the Downtown Eastside as a form of alcohol harm reduction.

Work is ongoing to engage with community organizations to better understand the needs of illicit drinkers and to explore partner-led stewardship opportunities and potential spaces for additional pilots in the Downtown Eastside.

Given the vulnerabilities of this population and the complexities of these supported spaces, it is critical that this work progresses carefully. Engineering and ACCS staff will continue to work with

VANDU, EIDGE and other community partners to support safe spaces for people to drink, and particularly illicit drinkers, in the DTES.

Discussion

Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy

The proposed 2023 Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Program follows direction laid out in the 2022 Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy.

Public Space Stewardship

Staff will continue to work closely with plaza partners to ensure sites remain safe, welcoming, and well maintained, and will engage with other stakeholders including VPD and VCH as appropriate.

Similar to previous years, City signage in each of these plazas will clearly indicate public alcohol consumption hours, direct visitors to the nearest bathroom, and invite residents to provide feedback to staff via 311 and email via plazas@vancouver.ca.

Staff have no concerns regarding the suitability of any of the proposed public plazas for alcohol consumption. The community partners at all of these plazas are all experienced at managing public alcohol consumption and are capable and willing to do so again in 2023.

Stakeholder Analysis

The proposed sites were reviewed by VPD and VCH, and no concerns were expressed. Further, the proposed year round program was shared with VPD and VCH for review, and no concerns were expressed.

Financial Implications

City costs for implementation of needed infrastructure such as portable washrooms, program signage, and other site-specific needs will be managed within existing Engineering budgets. The 2023 program is estimated to cost up to approximately \$10,000 for the duration of the program. These costs do not include staff time.

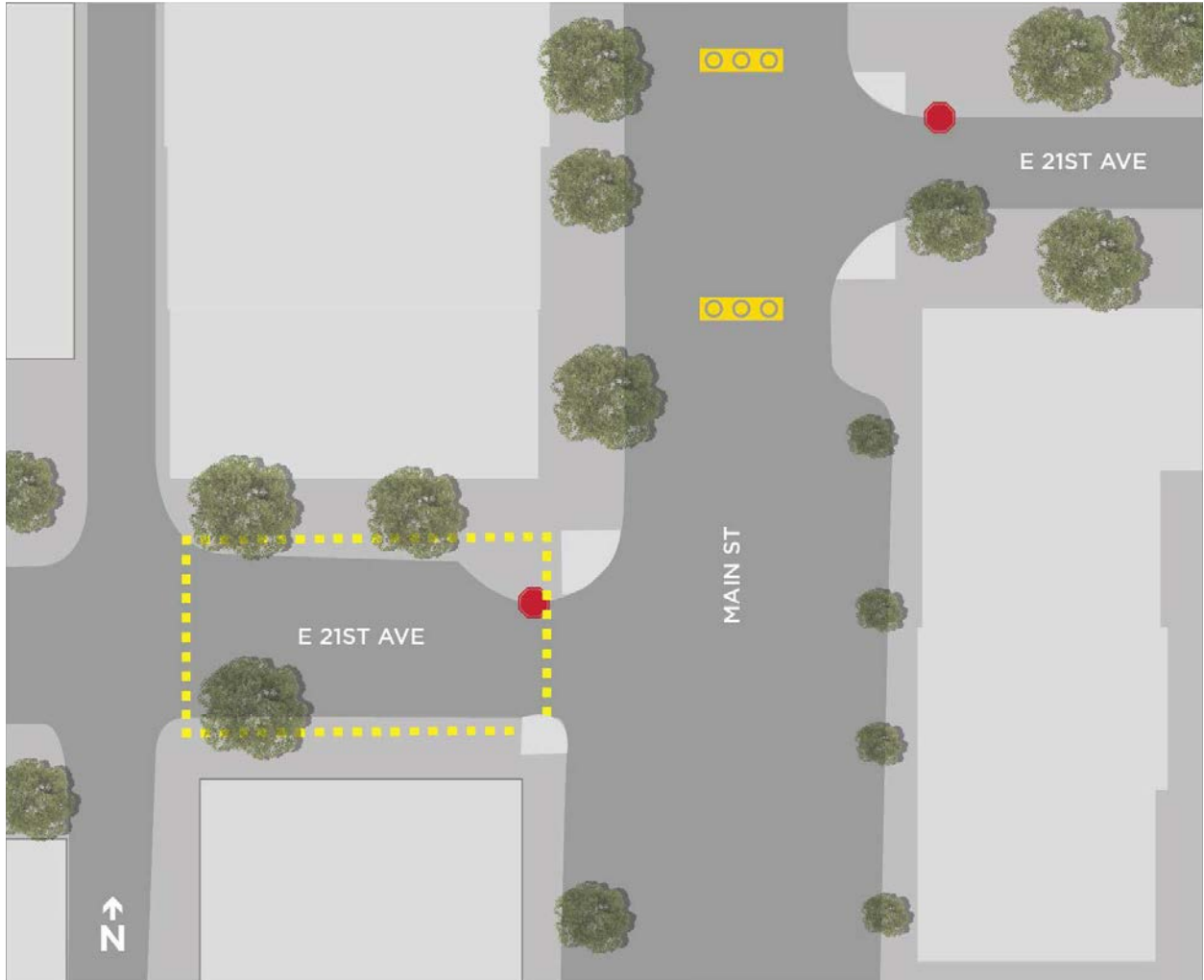
Legal Implications

Section 73 of the Liquor Control and Licensing Act (BC) gives the City the authority to designate, by by-law, public places as places where liquor may be consumed, subject to certain requirements as set out in the Act and the Liquor Control and Licensing Regulation.

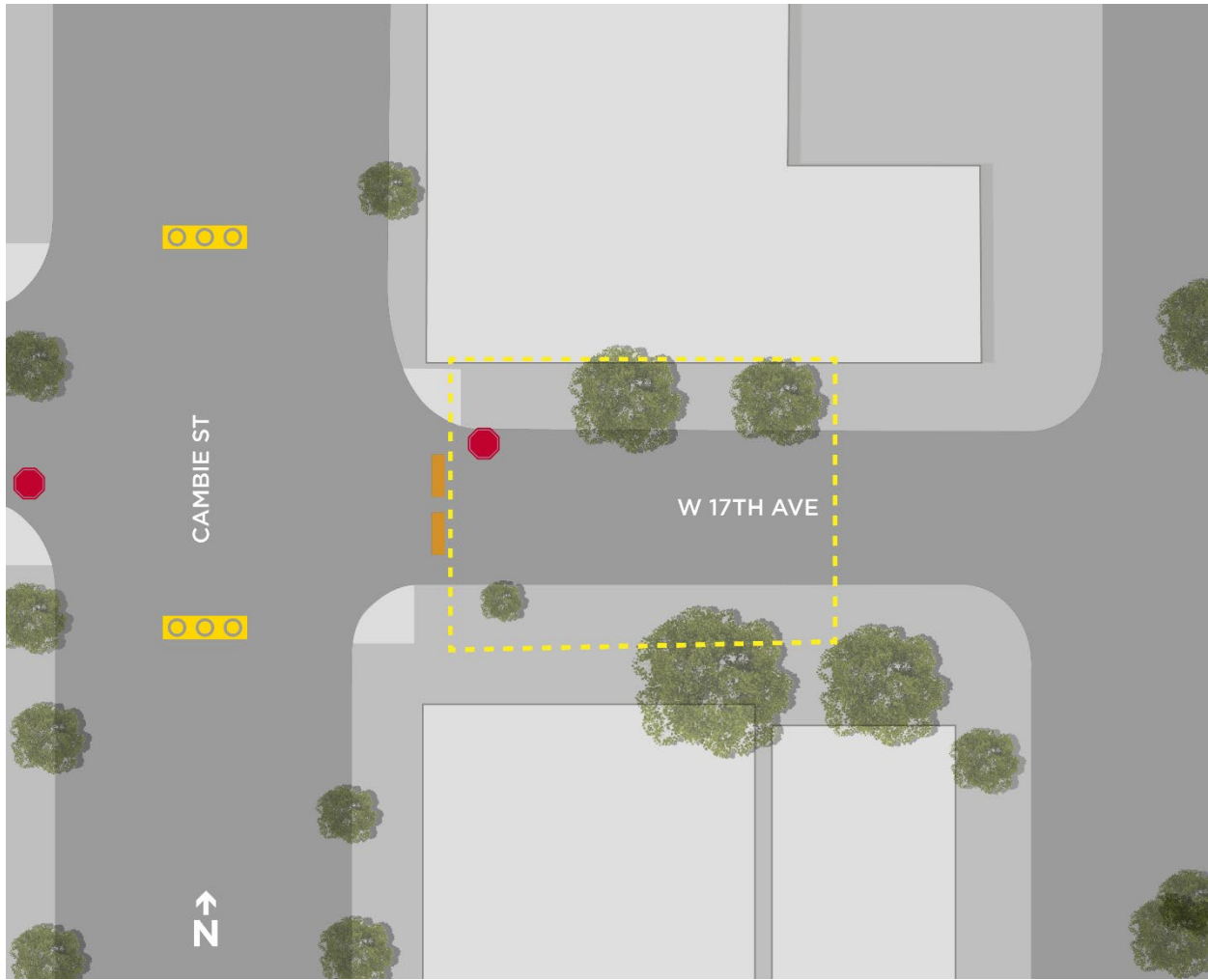
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Appendix A

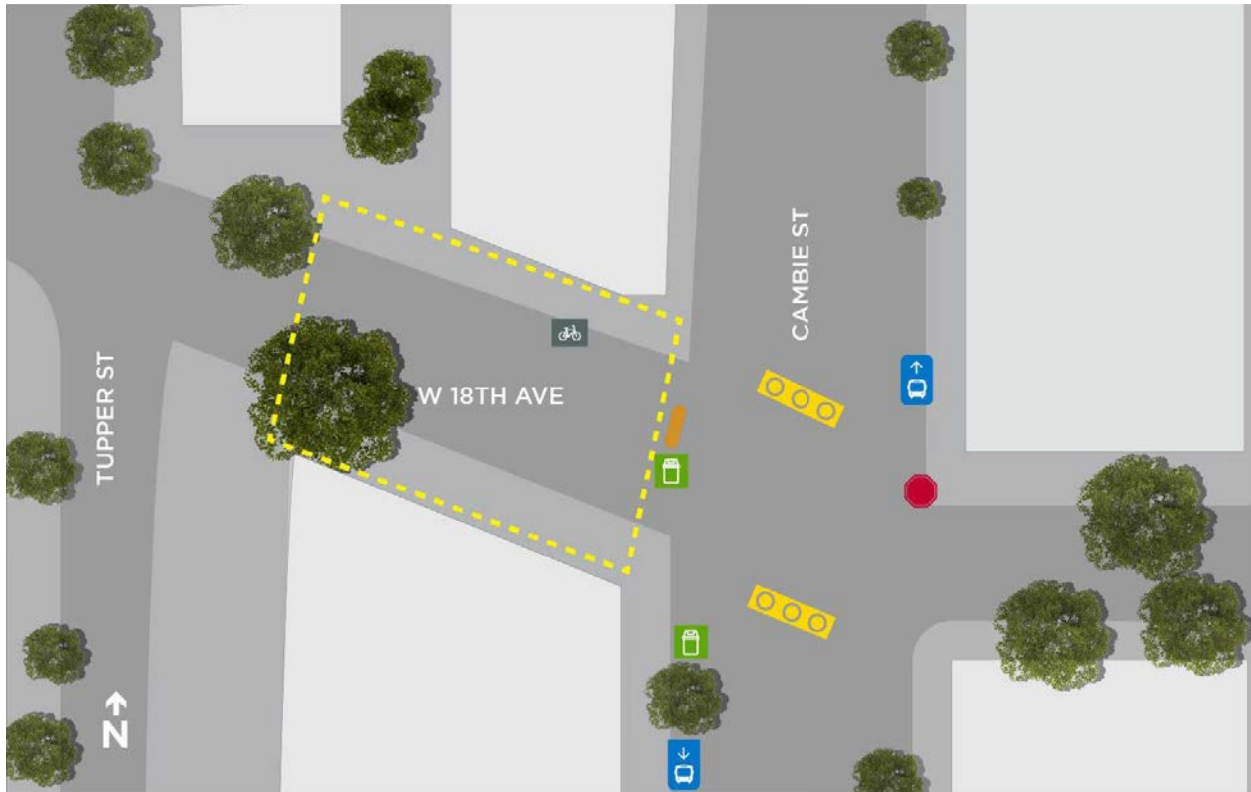
Designated area 1



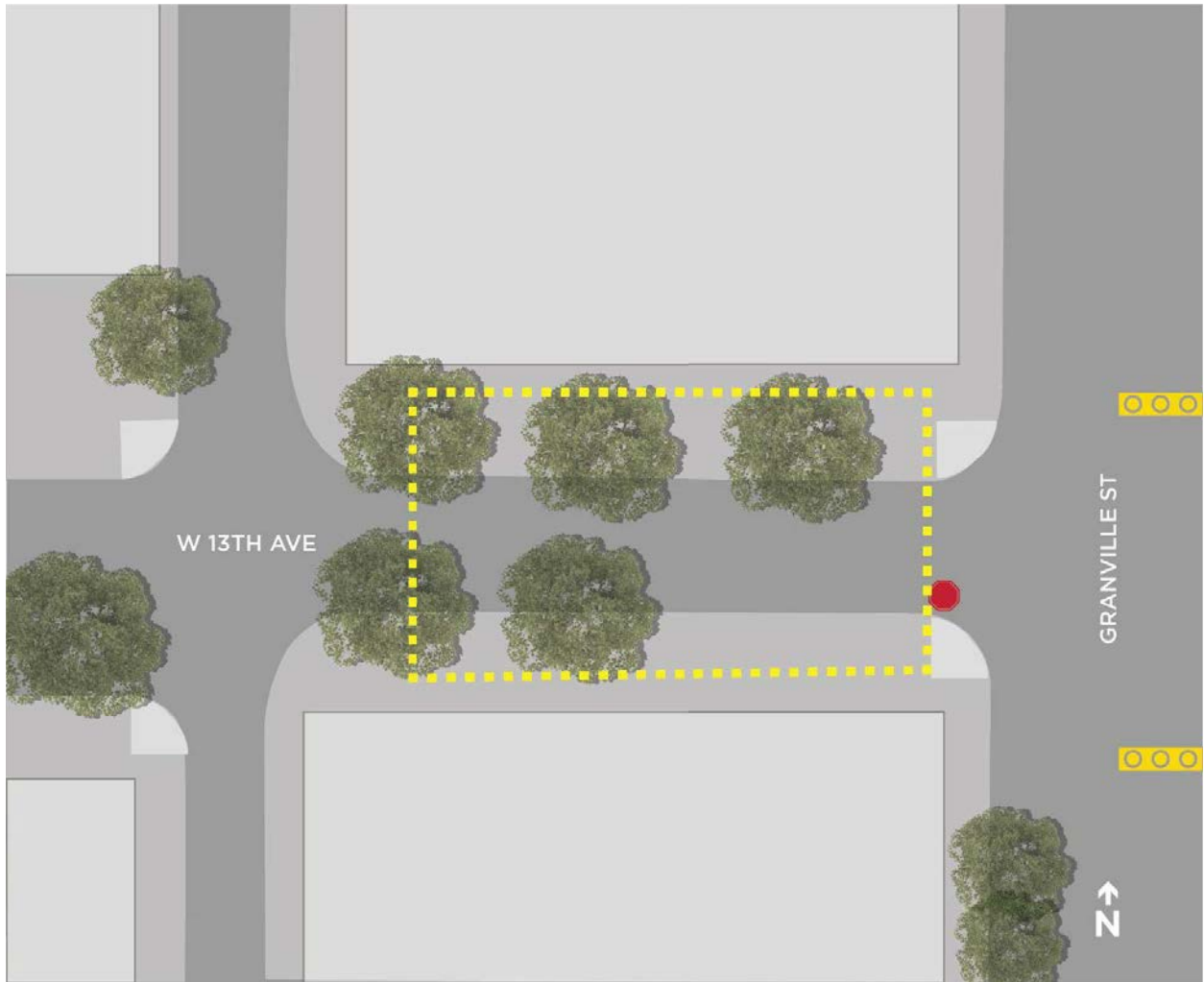
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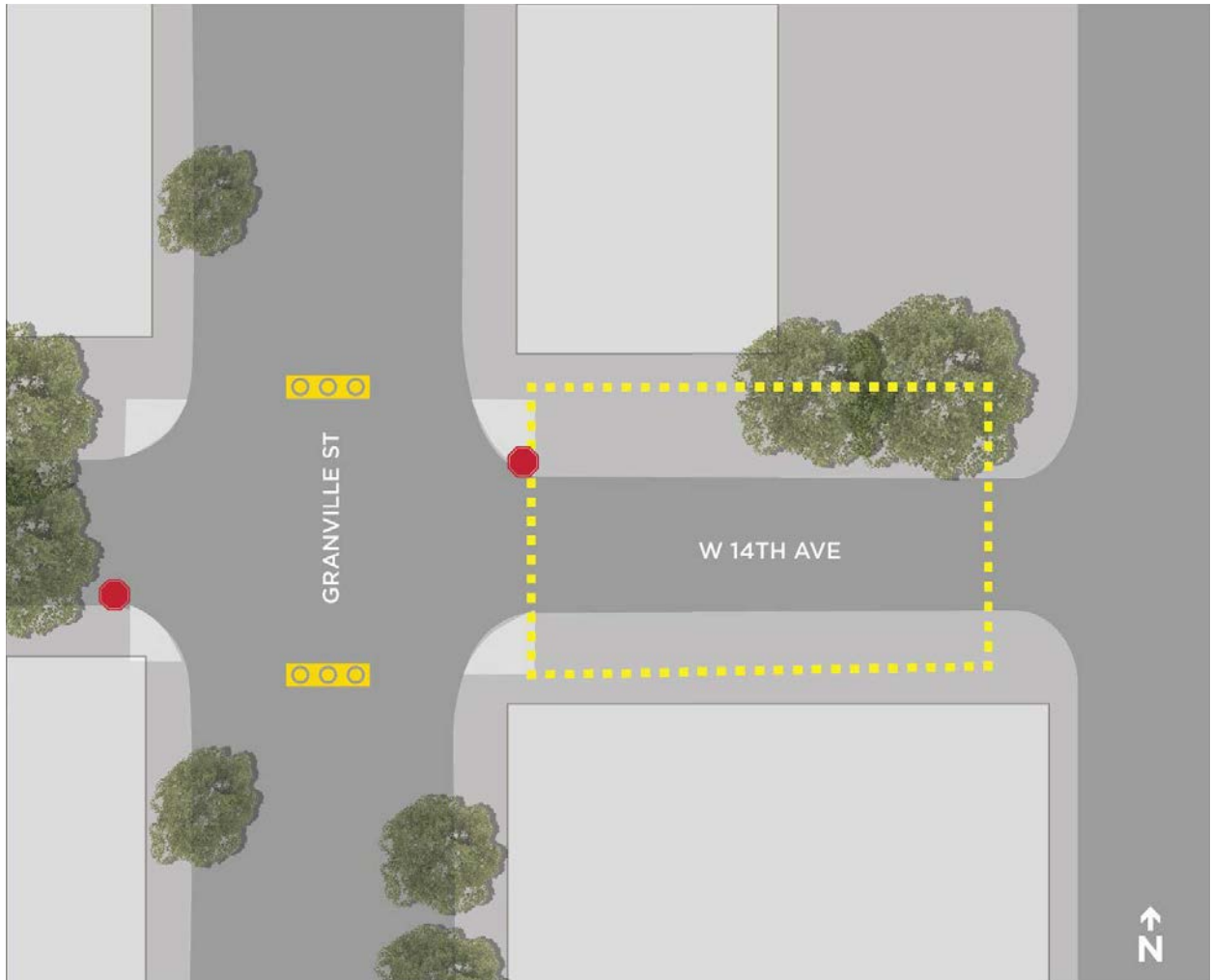
Designated area 3



Designated area 4



Designated area 5



Designated area 6



Designated area 7

