



COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: March 28, 2024
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: April 10, 2024
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities
FROM: General Manager, Engineering Services
SUBJECT: Sites for 2024 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 2024 Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Program. Based on requests from community partner stewards, the program will operate on a year-round or seasonal basis at different locations.

This report also recommends an extension to allow alcohol consumption at the Drinker's Lounge parklet, which supports a community-based managed alcohol and harm reduction program operated by PHS Community Services Society.

Previous Council Decisions

See Appendix B for a full list of Council decisions.

2023: Council approved amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow liquor consumption in one public plaza from May 15 to October 16, 2023, and in six public plazas year-round, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment.

2022: Council approved the Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy and amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to extend the Drinker’s Lounge permitted alcohol consumption at 111 Princess to March 31, 2024. Additionally, Council approved amendments to the By-law to allow liquor consumption in six public plazas from June 15 to October 10, 2022.

2021: Council approved 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. Further amendments extended the pilot at Drinker’s Lounge until March 31, 2022. Additionally, Council approved amendments to the By-law to allow a pilot for liquor consumption in three public plazas from July 15 to October 11, 2021.

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 the jurisdiction of the City. After consultation with VPD, VCH, internal stakeholders, and local Business Improvement Associations, four public plazas were selected for inclusion in the pilot program.

City Manager’s Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

Background

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. The Policy outlines a framework for the Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Program to operate, and the 2024 program follows this Policy’s recommendations.

Through partnership with the Drinker’s Lounge, a community managed alcohol program operated by PHS Community Services Society, the parklet at 111 Princess Street has been in operation since March 2021. Enabling alcohol consumption at this site provides a safe and dignified outdoor space for program participants. The parklet has not had any complaints or issues raised from surrounding businesses or the VPD in previous years.

Proposed 2024 Locations

In early 2024, 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 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 adjusted to the seasonal hours of nearby park bathrooms, business hours, and hours when community steward partners are able to lock and unlock portable washrooms.

Staff recommend continuing to offer two program streams for plazas; one for seasonal participation and one for year round. There were no issues with this approach last year, and staff have no concerns with continuing this approach as long as it is done in accordance with the *Alcohol Consumption in Public Plazas Policy*, i.e. staff monitor public space, bathroom access is maintained, and community steward partners are able to co-manage.

Adding the need to extend PHS's Drinker's Lounge parklet to the expressed plazas needs, staff propose:

Recommended Sites:

Social Service Parklet - 3-Year extension (May 15, 2024 to May 15, 2027):

- PHS Drinker's Lounge Parklet – *returning site*
Location: 111 Princess St.
Partners: PHS Community Services Society, Vancouver Coastal Health – *returning partners*

Public Plazas - Year round (May 15, 2024 to May 14, 2025):

- 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 – *returning 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

Public Plazas - Seasonal (May 15 to October 16, 2024):

- 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 location. 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, 2024, the program is proposed to run from 11am to 9pm daily, and from October 17, 2024 to May 14, 2025 the program is proposed to run from 11am to 5pm daily. The program at the Drinker’s Lounge parklet is proposed to continue operating from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm daily.

Discussion

Staff have no concerns regarding the suitability of any of the proposed sites for alcohol consumption. The community partners at all sites are experienced at managing public alcohol consumption and are capable and willing to do so again in 2024. Staff will continue to work closely with the partners to ensure sites remain safe, welcoming, and well maintained.

Similar to previous years, City signage in each plaza 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.

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 2024 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

**DRAFT By-law to amend the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735
Regarding Consumption of Liquor on City Land (2024)**

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This by-law amends the indicated provisions of the City Land Regulation By-law.
2. Council strikes out section 4C and substitutes the following:
“4C. Liquor may be consumed on city land:
 - (a) from May 15, 2024 to May 14, 2025 in designated areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, between the hours of:
 - (i) 11:00 am and 9:00 pm from May 15, 2024 to October 16, 2024, and
 - (ii) 11:00 am and 5:00 pm from October 17, 2024 to May 14, 2025;
 - (b) from May 15, 2024 to October 16, 2024 in designated area 7, between the hours of 11:00 am and 9:00 pm; and
 - (c) from May 15, 2024 to May 15, 2027 in designated area 8, between the hours of 9:30 am and 4:30 pm.”
3. Council strikes out Schedule 1 and substitutes a new Schedule 1 as attached to this by-law as Appendix A.
4. This by-law is to come into force and take effect on May 15, 2024.

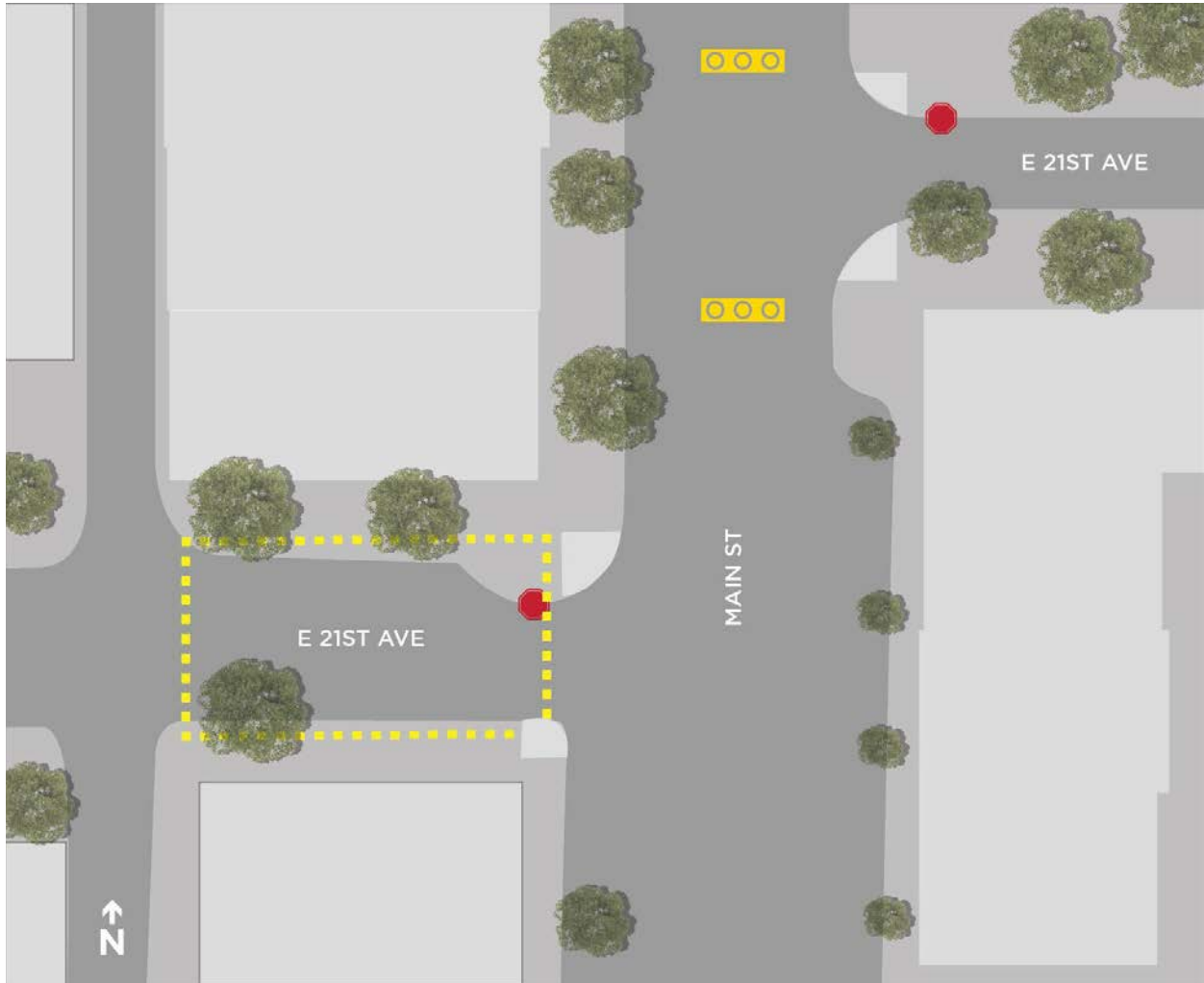
ENACTED by Council this _____ day of _____, 2024

Mayor

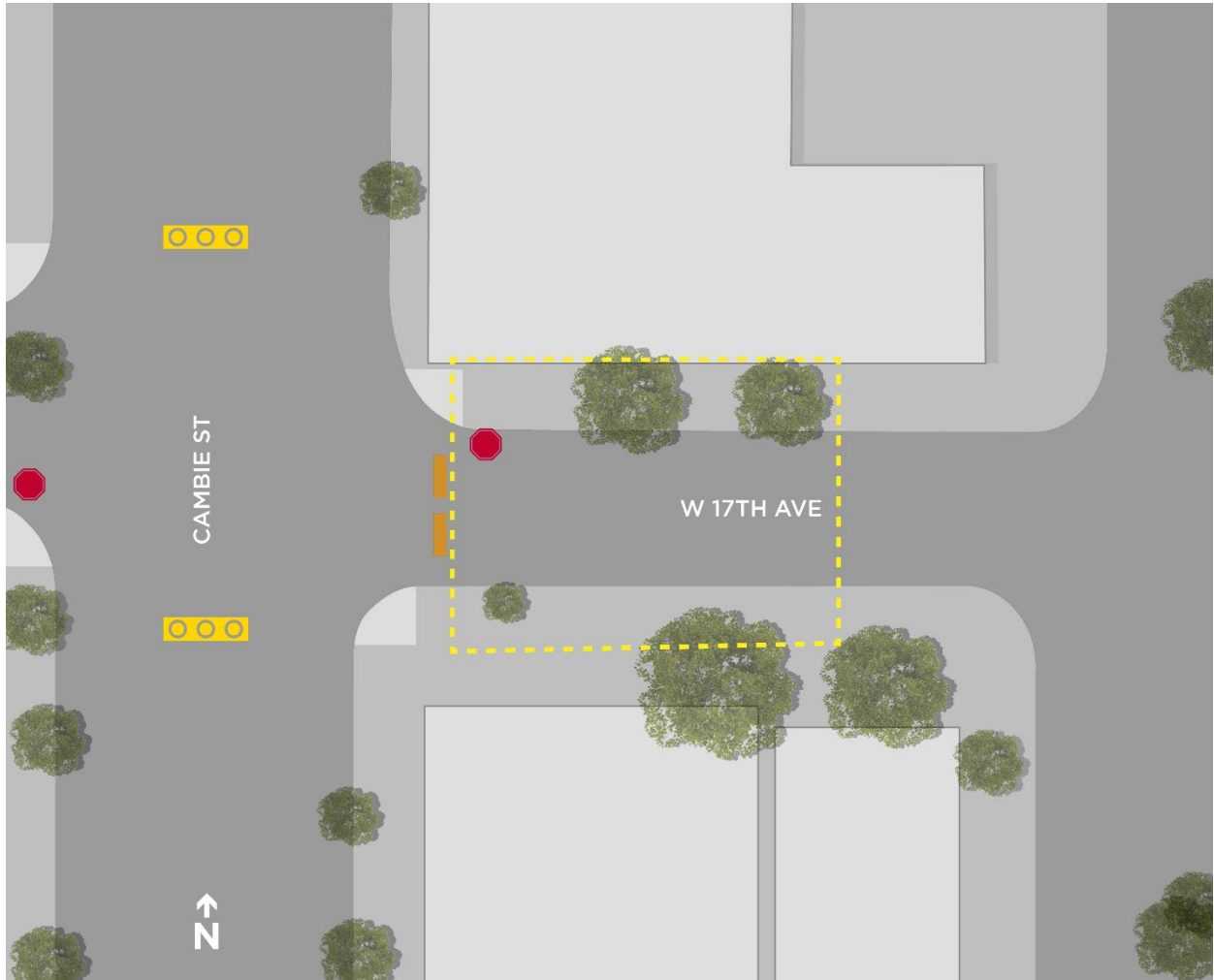
City Clerk

Schedule I City Land Where Liquor May be Consumed

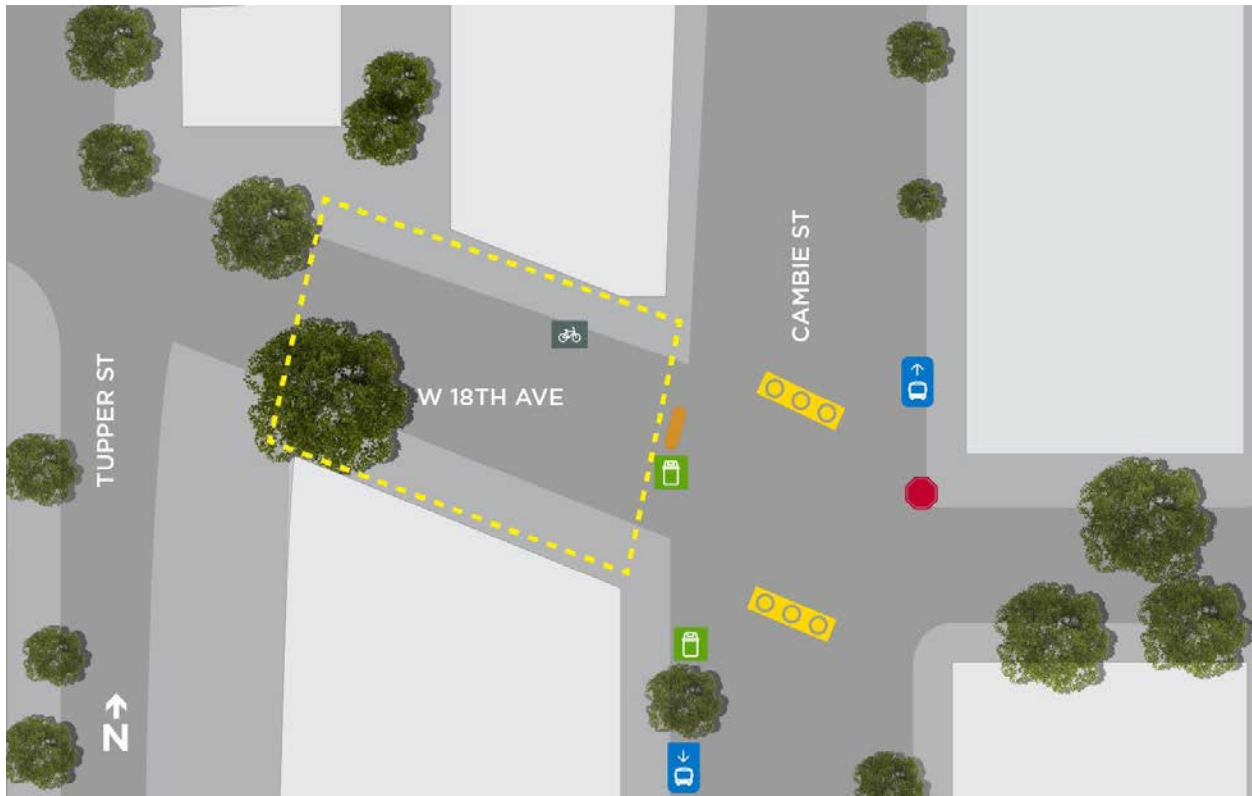
Designated area 1



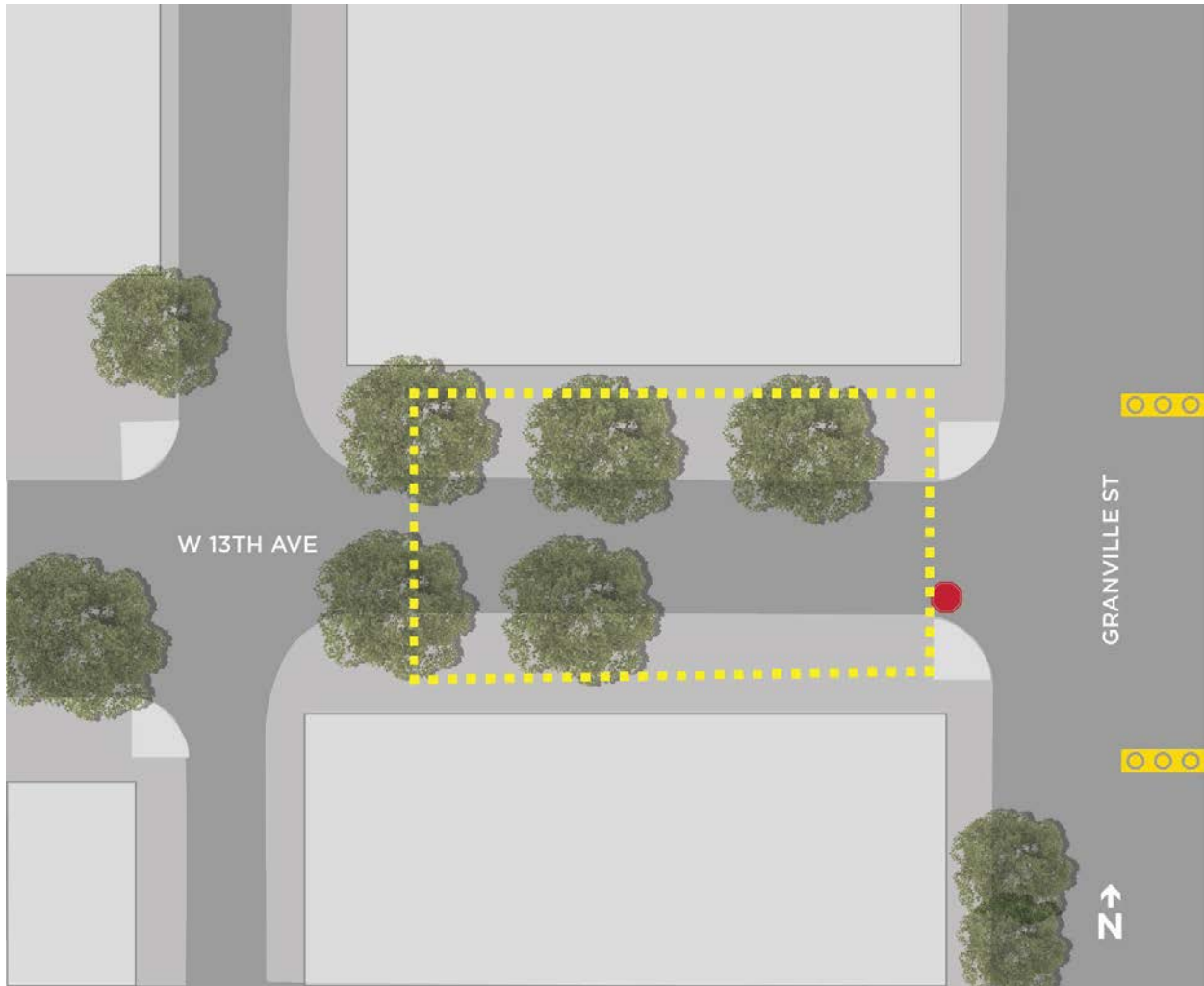
Designated area 2



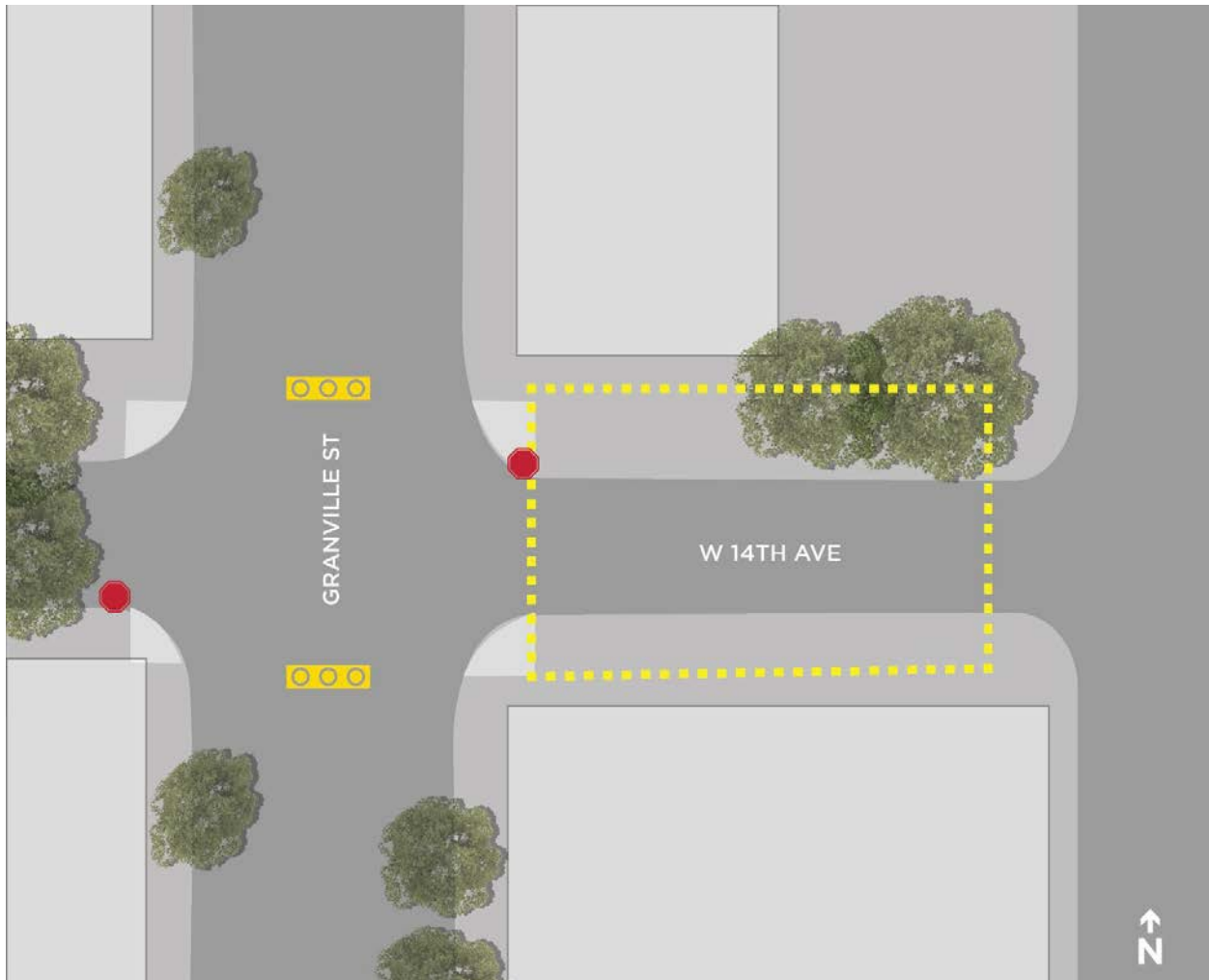
Designated area 3



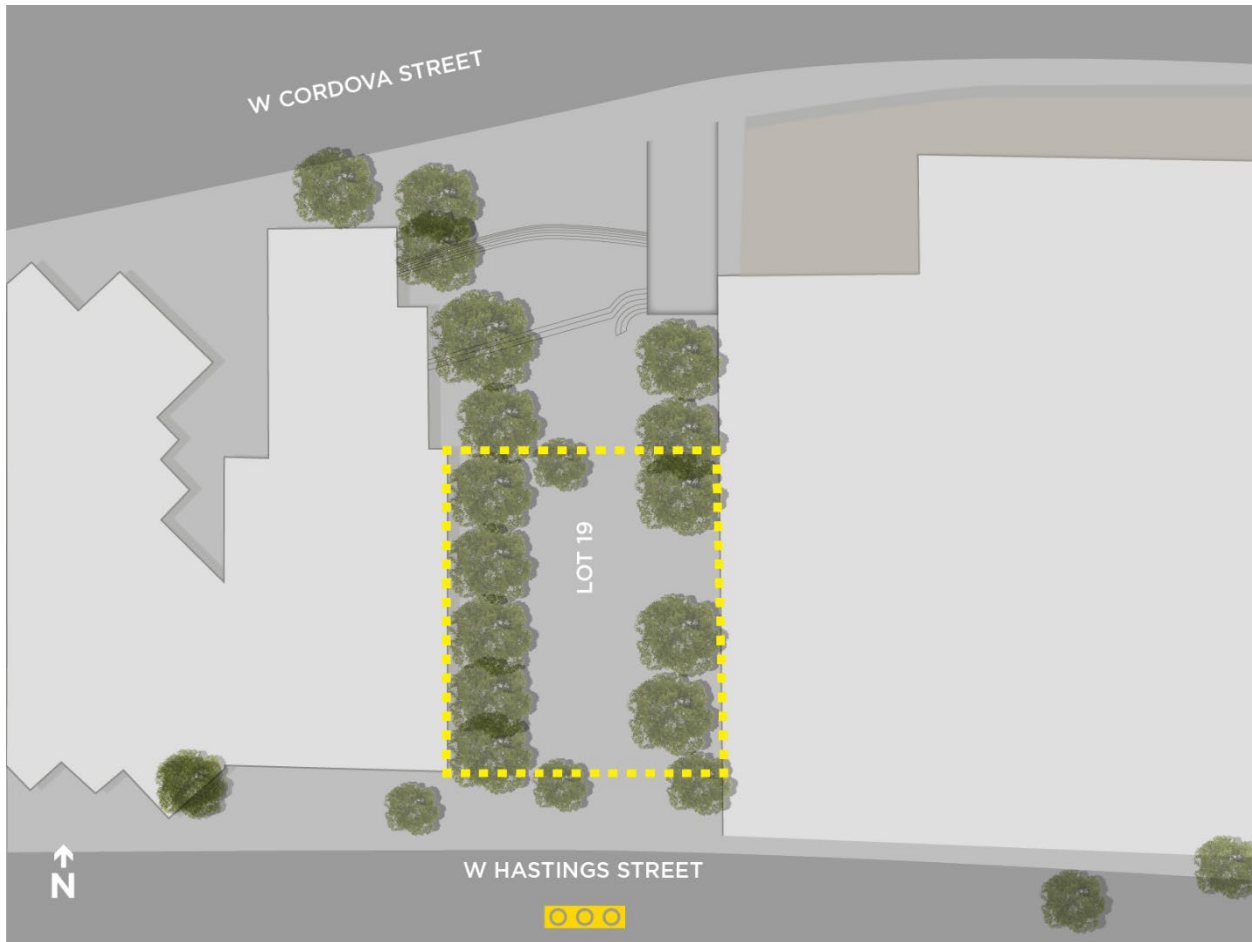
Designated area 4



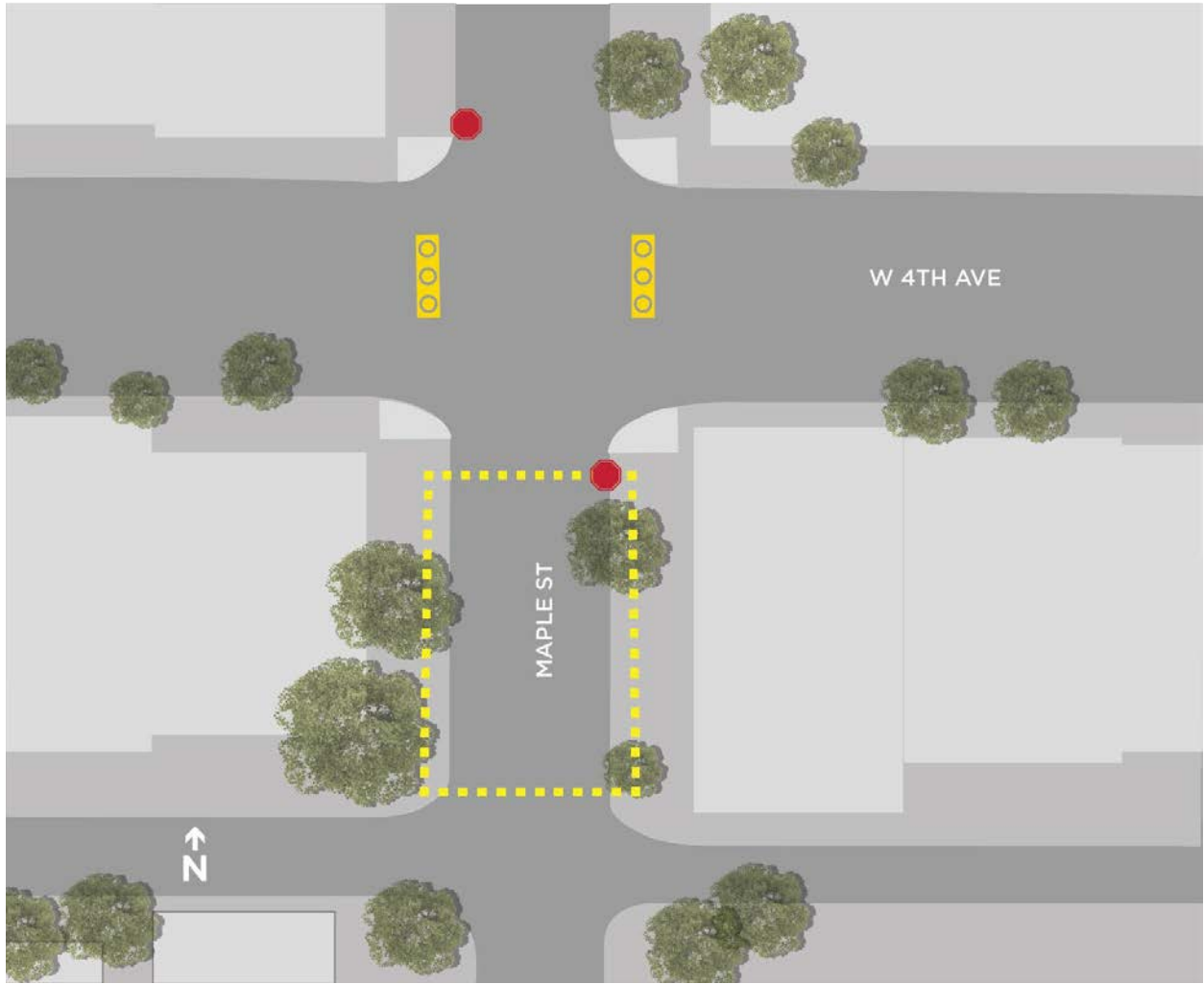
Designated area 5



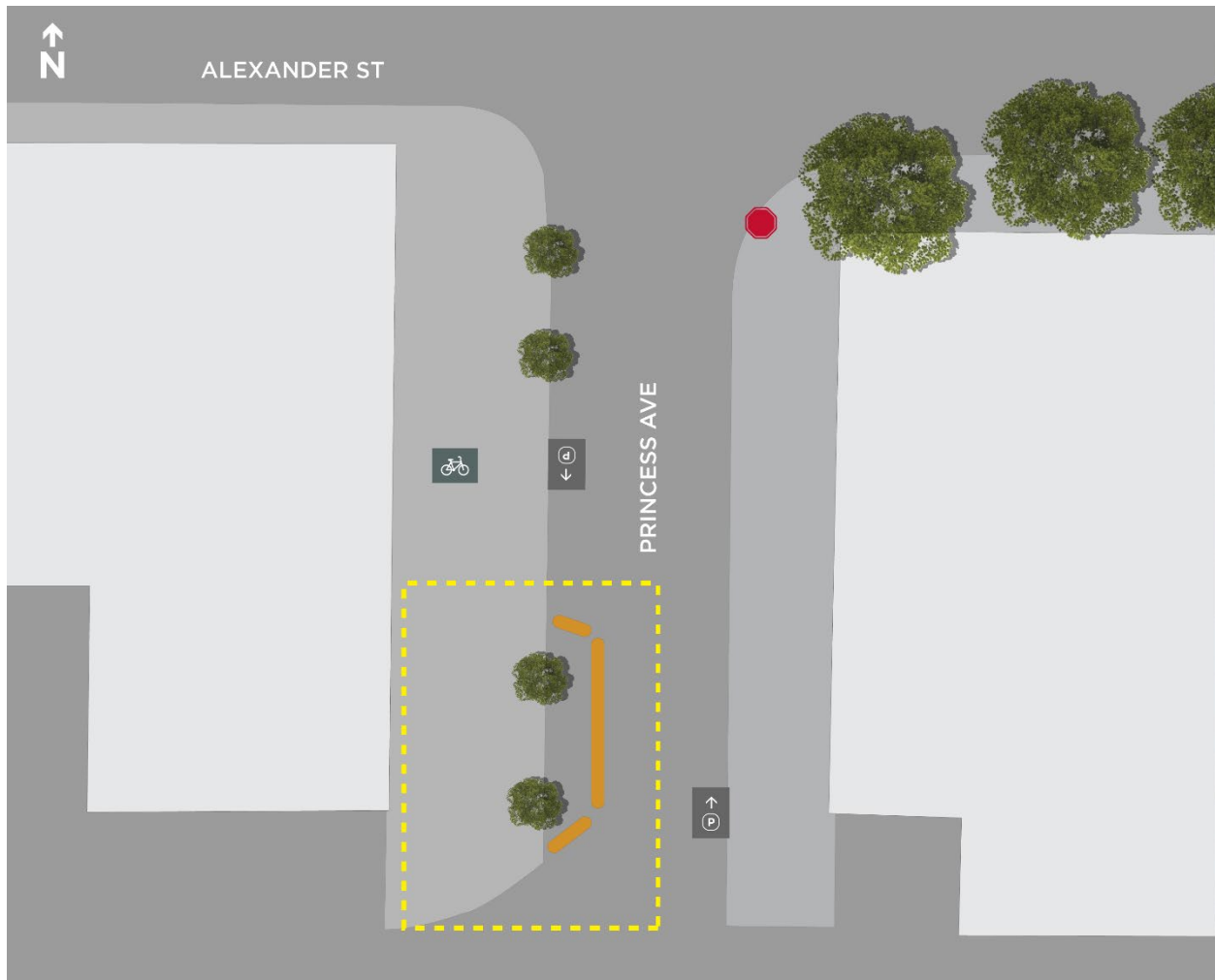
Designated area 6



Designated area 7



Designated area 8



Appendix B

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

April 11, 2023: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow liquor consumption in one public plaza from May 15 to October 16, 2023, and in six public plazas year round, and instructed staff to bring the by-law forward for enactment.

May 24, 2022: Council approved, in principle, amendments to the City Land Regulation By-law No. 8735 to allow 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 liquor consumption 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.