



## REPORT TO COUNCIL

### STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON POLICY AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**JULY 9, 2025**

A meeting of the Standing Committee of Council on Policy and Strategic Priorities was held on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at 9:31 am in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall. This Council meeting was convened in person and via electronic means as authorized by the Part 14 of the *Procedure By-law*.

**PRESENT:**

Councillor Peter Meiszner, Chair\* (Leave of Absence – Civic Business – 1 pm to 4 pm)  
Mayor Ken Sim\* (Leave of Absence – Civic Business – 5 pm onwards)  
Councillor Rebecca Bligh  
Councillor Lisa Dominato, Vice Chair\* (Leave of Absence – Civic Business – 3 pm onwards)  
Councillor Pete Fry  
Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung\* (Leave of Absence – Civic Business – 9:30 am to 12 pm and 5 pm to 8 pm)  
Councillor Mike Klassen  
Councillor Lucy Maloney  
Councillor Brian Montague\*  
Councillor Sean Orr  
Councillor Lenny Zhou

**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:**

Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager

**CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:**

Tina Penney, Deputy City Clerk  
Julie Emmerson, Meeting Coordinator  
David Yim, Meeting Coordinator

\* Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

## WELCOME

The Chair acknowledged we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh People. We thank them for having cared for this land and look forward to working with them in partnership as we continue to build this great city together.

The Chair also recognized the immense contributions of the City of Vancouver's team members who work hard every day to help make our city an incredible place to live, work, and play.

## **MATTERS ADOPTED ON CONSENT**

MOVED by Councillor Bligh  
SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

THAT Council adopt Reports 7 and 8 on consent.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY  
(Councillor Kirby-Yung absent for the vote)

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **1. 2025 Annual Transportation and Public Space Directors' Update**

The Director of Transportation and the Director of Public Space and Street Use provided a presentation, and along with staff from Engineering Services responded to questions.

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*During questions to staff, it was*

*MOVED by Councillor Dominato  
SECONDED by Councillor Klassen*

*THAT under section 5.4(e) of the Procedure By-law, the Committee be permitted to ask a second round of questions.*

*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY*

*Subsequently, during the second round of questions to staff, it was*

*MOVED by Councillor Klassen  
SECONDED by Councillor Zhou*

*THAT per section 5.5 of the Procedure By-law, Council suspend the rule of order and be permitted to ask an additional round of questions.*

*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND  
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY*

*The Committee recessed at 11:56 am and reconvened at 1:01 pm.*

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## REPORTS

### 1. **Safer Slower Streets** **April 29, 2025**

Staff from Engineering Services responded to questions.

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*During questions to staff, it was*

*MOVED by Councillor Kirby-Yung*  
*SECONDED by Councillor Montague*

*THAT under section 5.4(e) of the Procedure By-law, the Committee be permitted to ask a second round of questions.*

*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY*

\* \* \* \* \*

The Committee heard from ten speakers who spoke in support of the staff recommendations, and two speakers who spoke to other aspects of the staff recommendations.

*MOVED by Councillor Fry*  
*SECONDED by Councillor Kirby-Yung*

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law to reduce the speed limit on all minor streets to 30 km/h and incorporate existing 30 and 40 km/h speed limits on major roads generally in accordance with Appendix A of the Report dated April 29, 2025, entitled "Safer Slower Streets".
- B. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to bring forward for enactment a by-law generally in accordance with Appendix A of the Report dated April 29, 2025, entitled "Safer Slower Streets".
- C. THAT Council approve the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of 25 neighbourhood slow zones using speed limit gateway signage.
- D. THAT Council approve a change to the Annual Speed Hump Program to remove the requirement for consultation.
- E. THAT Council direct staff to report back with policy recommendations for setting speed limits on arterial and collector streets.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10838)  
(Mayor Sim absent from the vote)

**2. New Edition of the Fire By-law (2025 Fire By-law)  
May 6, 2025**

Staff from Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services responded to questions.

MOVED by Councillor Zhou

SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, adoption of the 2024 British Columbia Fire Code, together with amendments to reflect the “Unique to Vancouver Provisions” as the 2025 Fire By-law, as generally provided in Appendix A of the Report dated May 6, 2025, entitled “New Edition of the Fire By-law (2025 Fire By-law)”.
- B. THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to bring forward for enactment a by-law to repeal the existing Fire By-law and to substitute the proposed 2025 Fire By-law as referred to in A, to take effect upon enactment.
- C. THAT Council approve, in principle, consequential amendments to the Ticket Offences By-law generally as provided in Appendix B of the Report dated May 6, 2025, entitled “New Edition of the Fire By-law (2025 Fire By-law)”, to reflect the changes to the section numbers of offences in the proposed 2025 Fire By-law.
- D. THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to bring forward for enactment a by-law to amend the Ticket Offences By-law as referred to in C.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10839)

(Mayor Sim absent from the vote)

**3. 2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants  
June 27, 2025**

Staff from Arts, Culture and Community Services responded to questions.

The Committee heard from one speaker who spoke in opposition to the staff recommendations and one speaker who spoke to other aspects of the staff recommendations.

MOVED by Councillor Zhou

SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

***Operating and Capital Grants***

- A. THAT Council approve 20 Core Support Grants totalling \$554,563 from the 2025 Social Policy Grants Operating budget to the organizations listed in Appendix A-1 of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services,

Childcare and Other Grants” for the amounts recommended to each organization in the “2025 Recommend” column;

FURTHER THAT, following the dissolution of The Exchange Inner City Community Economic Development Association (“EIC”), Council reallocate the \$55,000 that Council previously approved for the EIC grant to the 2025 Social Policy Grants Operating budget, and approve a \$55,000 grant to the organization listed in Appendix A-3 of the above-noted Report using the reallocated funds.

- B. THAT Council approve two Social Responsibility Fund Grants totalling \$98,640 from the 2025 Edgewater Social Responsibility Fund to the organizations listed in Appendix B of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” for the amounts recommended to each organization in the “2025 Recommend” column.
- C. THAT Council approve 13 Sustainable Food Systems Grants totalling \$91,850 from the 2025 Social Policy Grants Operating budget to the organizations listed in Appendix C of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” for the amounts recommended to each organization in the “2025 Recommend” column.
- D. THAT Council approve two School Food Grants totalling \$76,063 from the 2025 Social Policy Grants Operating Budget to the organizations listed in Appendix D of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” for the amounts recommended to each organization in the “2025 Recommend” column.
- E. THAT Council approve 40 Childcare Enhancement Grants totalling \$980,000 from the 2025 Social Policy Operating Grants Budget – Childcare to the organizations listed in Appendix E-1 of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” for the amounts recommended to each organization in the “2025 Recommend” column.
- F. THAT Council approve one Childcare Project Grant totalling \$66,870 from the 2025 Social Policy Operating Grants Budget – Childcare to the organization listed in Appendix F of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” for the amount recommended in the “2025 Recommend” column.
- G. THAT Council approve 17 Childcare Reserve Grants totalling \$514,800 from the Childcare Reserve to the organizations listed in Appendix G of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” for the amounts recommended to each organization in the “2025 Recommend” column.
- H. THAT Council approve five Building Safer Communities Program (BSCP) Grants totalling \$65,000 through two grant streams to the organization listed in Appendix H-1 and Appendix H-2 of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” for the amounts recommended to each organization in the “2025 Recommend” column. Source of

funds is the federal Building Safer Communities Fund from Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada.

- I. THAT Council approve five Childcare Small Capital Grants totalling \$90,155 from the 2025 Small Capital Grants for Non-City Owned Childcare budget (\$50,747) to the organizations listed in Appendix I-1 of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled "2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants", and from the 2025 Social Infrastructure Grants - Climate budget (\$39,408) to the organizations listed in Appendix I-2 of the above-noted Report, for the amounts recommended to each organization in the "2025 Recommend" column.
- J. THAT Council approve three School Aged Care Expansion Capital Grants totalling \$34,221 from the 2025 ACCS School Aged Expansion Grants budget to the organizations listed in Appendix J of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled "2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants" for the amounts recommended to each organization in the "2025 Recommend" column.
- K. THAT Council approve seven Social Policy Small-Medium Capital Grants totalling \$242,570 from the 2025 Social Policy Capital Grants budget (\$119,455) to the organizations listed in Appendix K-1 of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled "2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants", and from the 2025 Social Infrastructure Grants - Climate budget (\$123,115) to the organizations listed in Appendix K-2 of the above-noted Report, for the amounts recommended to each organization in the "2025 Recommend" column.
- L. THAT Council approve one grant of \$349,258 the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society as described in Appendix L of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled "2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants" from the 2025 General Government Operating budget (\$309,258) and from the 2025 Social Policy Grants Operating budget (\$40,000) to support operations of the Collingwood Gymnasium and Collingwood Annex from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

#### ***Nominal Licence Agreement Renewal***

- M. THAT Council authorize the Director of Real Estate Services to negotiate and execute a renewal licence agreement (the "IRSSS Renewal Licence") with the Indian Residential School Survivors Society ("IRSSS"), for an approximate 1,690 sf portion of the 8th floor of the City owned building located at 350 West Georgia Street (the "IRSSS Licence Area"), legally described as: PID: 019-023-251; LOT 541 BLOCK 56 PLAN LMP19600 DISTRICT LOT 541 NWD, on the terms and conditions outlined in Appendix M of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled "2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants", and otherwise to the satisfaction of the Chief Librarian & CEO of Vancouver Public Library, General Manager of Real Estate and Facilities Management, and Director of Legal Services, including
  - I. Term: Three (3) year term commencing December 1, 2025.
  - II. Licence Fee: Ten dollars (\$10.00) for the term, inclusive of payment of

rent-in-lieu of property taxes.

- III. Maintenance Fee: \$9,295.00 per annum, payable in equal monthly instalments of \$774.58 plus GST.

FURTHER THAT as the basic rent (payable as a licence fee) under the IRSSS Licence for the IRSSS Licence Area will be below the applicable market rate and includes payment of rent-in-lieu of property taxes, M constitutes a grant valued at approximately \$60,840 per annum, or \$182,510 for the 3-year term of the licence agreement.

***Other Applicable Recommendations***

- N. THAT, pursuant to Section 206(1)(j) of the Vancouver Charter, Council deems any organization listed in Appendix A to M of the Report dated June 27, 2025, entitled “2025 Community Services, Childcare and Other Grants” that is not otherwise a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency to be contributing to the health and welfare of the City.
- O. THAT Council delegate its authority to the General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services to negotiate and execute agreements to disburse the grants described in A to M on the terms and conditions set out herein or such other terms and conditions as are satisfactory to the General Manager of Arts, Culture and Community Services and the Director of Legal Services.
- P. THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council’s adoption of A to O unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND A to M  
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY (Vote No. 10840)  
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

**4. Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan Implementation Grant Program Allocation 2025  
July 9, 2025**

MOVED by Councillor Kirby-Yung  
SECONDED by Councillor Dominato

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council approve the matching grant allocation of \$546,055 to 15 Downtown Eastside (DTES) non-profit organizations to advance the social, economic and environmental objectives of the DTES Plan, as detailed in Appendix A of the Report dated July 9, 2025, entitled “Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan Implementation Grant Program Allocation 2025”. Source of funds from the previously approved multi-year capital project budget, \$496,055 in 2023 – 26 DTES Plan Matching Grants and \$50,000 in the 2023-26 DTES Plan Strategic Project Grants.

- B. THAT, pursuant to section 206(1)(j) of the Vancouver Charter, Council deems any organization listed in Appendix A of the Report dated July 9, 2025, entitled "Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan Implementation Grant Program Allocation 2025" that is not otherwise a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency to be contributing to the welfare of Vancouver.
- C. THAT the General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability (GM of PDS or their designate) be authorized to negotiate and execute agreements to disburse the grants described in this report on the terms and conditions generally set out below and on such other terms and conditions as are satisfactory to the GM of PDS and the Director of Legal Services.
- D. THAT no legal rights or obligations will be created by the approval of A to C above unless and until the applicable grant agreement or letter of agreement is approved by the City in accordance with C above and executed and delivered by both the grant recipient and GM of PDS (or their designate).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND A  
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY (Vote No. 10841)  
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

**5. 2025 Graffiti Abatement Grants for Business Improvement Areas  
June 10, 2025**

MOVED by Councillor Fry  
SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council approve \$500,000 of 2025 Graffiti Abatement Grants to be disbursed to the 22 Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) as set out in Appendix A of the Report dated June 10, 2025, entitled "2025 Graffiti Abatement Grants for Business Improvement Areas", on the basis that Council deems the 22 BIAs to be contributing to the beautification of the City of Vancouver, with the source of funds to be the 2025 Operating Budget.
- B. THAT issuance of the 2025 Graffiti Abatement Grants be subject to the BIAs each executing and delivering a grant agreement to the satisfaction of the Director, Business and Economy and the Director of Legal Services.
- C. THAT the Director of Legal Services be authorized to execute grant agreements with each of the respective BIAs.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY AND A  
BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY (Vote No. 10842)  
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

**6. Contract Award for Operator (Lease) for VanDusen Botanical Garden Restaurant -  
WITHDRAWN**

**7. Contract Award for Operator for Kitsilano Beach Restaurant  
June 4, 2025**

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council authorize City staff to negotiate an agreement for Operator for Kitsilano Beach Restaurant with Hawksworth Restaurant Services Inc. for an initial term of ten (10) years, with the City's option to extend for two (2) additional five-year (5-year) terms, for a maximum total term of twenty (20) years. The City will not provide any financial contribution to the operator during the contract.
- B. THAT Council delegate its authority to execute the Agreement to the City's Director of Legal Services, Chief Procurement Officer, and General Manager of the Vancouver Park Board.
- C. THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of A and B above, unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT (Vote No. 10836)  
(Councillor Kirby-Yung absent for the vote)

**8. Change Orders for Consulting Services for ServiceNow Resources Augmentation  
June 23, 2025**

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council authorize City staff to execute two (2) change orders totalling \$3,673,500 to an existing Consulting Services contract with Deloitte Inc. for ServiceNow Resources Augmentation and bringing the new estimated contract value to \$7,637,168. The two (2) change orders will be funded from within the existing approved Technology Services Capital Budget.
- B. THAT Council delegate its authority to execute the two (2) change orders to the City's Director of Legal Services, Chief Procurement Officer, and General Manager of Development, Buildings & Licensing.
- C. THAT no legal rights or obligations will arise or be created by Council's adoption of A and B above, unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

ADOPTED ON CONSENT (Vote No. 10837)  
(Councillor Kirby-Yung absent for the vote)

## COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTIONS

### 1. **A Drain on Resources and Resources Down the Drain: Pulling the plug on In-Sink Garbage Disposal**

The Committee heard from two speakers who spoke in support of the motion.

MOVED by Councillor Fry

SECONDED by Councillor Kirby-Yung

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

#### WHEREAS

1. First invented a hundred years ago, the in-sink food disposal unit (also known as in-sink garbage disposal unit or garburator) is an electrically powered mechanical macerator or grinder, designed to shred food waste into pieces small enough to pass through plumbing. The process effectively diverts food waste from composting or landfill to be processed via wastewater treatment plants.
2. Garburators add a significant load of organic solids and nutrients to wastewater systems, increasing the strain on treatment facilities and potentially causing clogs and higher water usage, in contrast to normal household drainage of blackwater and greywater, which, while still requiring robust treatment, generally poses less strain in terms of solids and nutrient loads compared to garburator waste.
3. Specific impacts of in sink food disposal on wastewater treatment systems include:
  - a. **Increased Solid Load:** Food waste from garbage disposals adds to the solid matter in wastewater, requiring more effort to remove before treatment can begin. Solids must be physically separated and disposed of, adding to operational costs.
  - b. **Higher Nutrient Loads:** The organic matter from food waste contributes to higher nutrient loads, such as nitrogen and phosphorus. These nutrients can lead to issues like oxygen depletion in water bodies, affecting aquatic life
  - c. **Operational Strain:** The additional solid load can settle in treatment basins, clog pumps, and damage equipment, leading to increased maintenance and replacement costs.
  - d. **Contaminants:** If not carefully screened, in sink garbage disposal can introduce contaminants like PFAS (forever chemicals) and microplastics into the wastewater stream, which can be recirculated in the treated water or separated bio-sludge.
  - e. **Methane Generation:** Organic material and food waste can also decompose in sewer systems before reaching treatment plants, releasing methane, a potent greenhouse gas.
  - f. **Clogged Pipes:** Food waste can also create significant problems in the sanitary sewer pipe network. Notably, fats, oils, and grease (FOG) congeal

and solidify into “fatbergs” that can result in clogs, sewage backups, and overflows necessitating expensive remediation. Every year Metro Vancouver spends more than \$2.7 million fixing grease damage in the sewer system.<sup>1</sup>

4. Food Waste isn't Garbage. Composting food waste is a better approach than diverting it to wastewater treatment, primarily because composting offers a valuable resource at a lower cost. Composting is more environmentally friendly, resource-efficient and regulatorily compliant. In Metro Vancouver, food scraps have been banned from solid waste disposal since January 2015.
5. Stricter modern water quality standards are requiring increasingly costly water treatment technologies. Liquid waste in Vancouver is processed at the 1963-commissioned Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant and is scheduled to be upgraded from primary to tertiary treatment at a cost of \$10 billion (2025).<sup>2</sup>
6. Source separation, diverting organic solids from grey and black water is largely seen as a cost-effective measure to mitigate the cost of wastewater treatment. As a result many municipalities have banned garburators, including Toronto (2002), Victoria (2002 – industrial use), Ottawa (2003), Kingston (2008), Barrie (2012), Squamish (2016).<sup>3</sup> The City of Vancouver currently has a food waste diversion plan in Solid Waste By-law No. 8417<sup>4</sup> that prohibits the unlawful disposal of food waste. The City's Sewer and Watercourse By-law No. 8093<sup>5</sup> regulates the quantity and quality of discharged wastes into the sewerage system.

#### THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to amplify Metro Vancouver messaging and remind residents via the City's own Waste Disposal and Recycling webpage, printed pickup schedules, and information channels to publicly communicate the cost, infrastructure and environmental impacts of in-sink disposal, and encourage residents' use of composting and green bin organic waste diversion.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to report back with proposed amendments to the Building By-law to prohibit in sink disposal units in new construction in the City

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<sup>1</sup> CBC | Metro Vancouver removes 50 tonnes of 'fatbergs' from Richmond, B.C., sewers  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/fatbergs-richmond-sewer-1.7363936>

<sup>2</sup> Metro Vancouver | Iona Island Wastewater Treatment Plant Projects  
<https://metrovancover.org/services/liquid-waste/iona-island-wastewater-treatment-plant-projects>

<sup>3</sup> City of Vancouver FOI Proactive Release | Most recent records regarding the usage of garburators  
<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/2020-282-release.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> City of Vancouver | Amendment to Solid Waste By-law No 8417 regarding organic waste  
<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/bylaw-11092.PDF>

<sup>5</sup> City of Vancouver | Sewer and Watercourse By-law No. 8093  
<https://bylaws.vancouver.ca/8093c.PDF>

Vancouver;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to report back with proposed amendments to the Solid Waste By-law and Sewer and Watercourse By-law to properly divert food scraps from liquid waste disposal.

- C. THAT Council requests that the Mayor write a letter to the Chair and Board of Metro Vancouver advising concerns over the impacts of in-sink disposal units on wastewater treatment plant costs and urging a regional approach to curtail the use of in-sink disposal units, and ban food scrap from liquid waste disposal.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10843)  
(Councillor Montague and Mayor Sim absent from the vote)

## **2. From Vacancy to Vitality: Launching a Temporary Use Pilot for Empty Storefronts in the Downtown Eastside**

The Committee heard from two speakers who spoke in support of the motion.

MOVED by Councillor Klassen  
SECONDED by Councillor Zhou

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

### **WHEREAS**

1. The Downtown Eastside is a culturally rich but economically challenged area facing persistently high commercial vacancy rates where the number of storefronts sitting empty hover at levels as high as 32%. This level is well above the 5% to 7% vacancy range considered healthy for urban neighbourhood (City of Vancouver Storefront Report, 2023);
2. Empty storefronts, including those in surrounding neighbourhoods such as Hastings Crossing and Strathcona, not only represent lost economic potential, they also contribute to perceptions of decline and disorder, especially in areas already impacted by poverty, open drug use, and visible mental health crises;
3. The Downtown Eastside has a strong history of fostering arts and culture, including work by celebrated street artists, indigenous artists, and providing the foundations for an emerging arts district;
4. Despite demand from prospective tenants, including artists, small business owners, social enterprises, and community organizations, barriers such as complex City permitting processes and rigid zoning classifications make it difficult to occupy these spaces, even on a temporary basis;
5. Business Improvement Associations (BIAs) have expressed strong support for a collaborative, community-led pilot that would enable safe, short-term activation of

ground-floor vacancies for public benefit;

6. A Temporary Occupancy Pilot could unlock affordable, space for pop-up shops, new entrepreneurs, artist studios, cultural production, and community uses, all of which would bring new life to these neighbourhoods while supporting economic inclusion and innovation;
7. There is also strong interest in expanding allowed temporary uses to include pop-up restaurants and kitchens, peer support hubs, and light creative manufacturing, all of which align well with the social fabric and mixed-use character of these neighbourhoods;
8. The City of Vancouver has successfully implemented flexible permitting frameworks in the past, such as the Arts Event Licence and the Special Inspection process, which strike a balance between streamlined access and health and life safety requirements; and
9. These past flexible permitting frameworks demonstrate that the City can enable activation of underused space without compromising public safety, provided that inspection and oversight are focused and responsive.

#### THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to report back in Q4 2025 with a proposed Temporary Occupancy Pilot Program in the Downtown Eastside to allow vacant ground-floor commercial spaces to be used for up to 12 months without rezoning or change of use provided life safety standards are met;

FURTHER THAT the proposed pilot program design should:

- Prioritize uses that benefit the community, such as art studios, small retail, cultural spaces, and enterprises that align well with the social fabric and mixed-use character of these neighbourhoods;
  - Consider expanding the program to also include temporary food uses (e.g. commissary kitchens, pop-up dining), community services (e.g. counselling or peer support), and light creative manufacturing activities;
  - Incorporate any other recommendations that that staff consider would advance the intended outcomes of the motion.
- B. THAT staff be directed to report back by Q3 2026 on the pilot outcomes including business activity, community engagement, and space occupancy, with recommendations for improvements or possible city-wide expansion should the pilot be successful.
  - C. THAT Council direct staff to explore creating a Temporary Retail, Business, and Creative Use Event Licence, similar to the Arts Event Licence, to support future short-term activations, in coordination with relevant City departments and

consultation with BIAs, non-profits, property owners, and other stakeholders, and report back on a draft implementation strategy as a part of the upcoming DTES Plan update.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10844)

(Mayor Sim absent from the vote)

### **3. Opening Doors: Expanding Ownership Options for Laneway and Backyard Homes**

The Committee heard from four speakers who spoke in support of the motion.

MOVED by Councillor Kirby-Yung

SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

#### WHEREAS

1. Vancouver continues to face housing affordability challenges, particularly for first-time buyers, young families, seniors, and multigenerational families;
2. Nearly 42% of single-family homes in Vancouver are owned mortgage-free by individuals aged 65 or older, many of whom are interested in downsizing, creating housing for extended family members, or wishing to age in place in their neighbourhoods and communities;
3. While the City has recently enabled stratification and subdivision for multiplex developments, the same opportunity does not currently apply to laneway homes and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), even when these units meet the siting, massing, and design guidelines of the R1-1 policy;
4. This distinction is policy-based rather than technical, and prevents homeowners from leveraging existing equity to finance and contribute to new housing supply and options, despite laneway homes and ADUs being compliant with all applicable R1-1 standards;
5. Other jurisdictions such as Seattle and California have implemented policies that allow ADUs to be stratified or subdivided, resulting in a surge of new housing production and flexible ownership models; and
6. Broader access to subdivision or stratification for all detached secondary dwellings, regardless of whether they are part of a multiplex or single-family lot, would support Vancouver's goals of aging in place, intergenerational housing, and attainable homeownership.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

A. THAT Council direct staff to explore and report back on options to allow the subdivision or stratification of residential lots containing secondary detached housing units (such as laneway homes or ADUs), particularly in situations where:

- The units comply with R1-1 zoning guidelines;
- The form and siting are functionally equivalent to those permitted in multiplex subdivisions.

FURTHER THAT the staff report include:

- A comparison of subdivision and stratification rules for multiplex versus ADU and laneway housing forms;
- Regulatory and legal pathways to enable stratification and/or fee-simple ownership of laneway homes built alongside existing or new single-family homes;
- Best practices from other jurisdictions (e.g., Seattle, California) that have implemented similar reforms;
- Analysis of benefits related to housing supply, financing access, aging in place, and use of equity by long-term homeowners;
- Alignment with the Vancouver Plan, Missing Middle Housing program, and Climate Emergency Action Plan.

B. THAT staff engage with community members, homebuilders, mortgage lenders, and legal experts in land ownership and titles to assess feasibility and policy implications.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10845)

**4. Developing a Vision Zero Road Safety Policy and Action Plan**

The Committee heard from 28 speakers who spoke in support of the motion.

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*During hearing of speakers, it was*

*MOVED by Councillor Montague  
SECONDED by Councillor Bligh*

*THAT Council extend the meeting past 5 pm in order to complete hearing speakers on Member's Motion 4 and recess for one hour.*

*CARRIED AND BY THE REQUIRED MAJORITY*  
*(Councillor Zhou opposed)*

*RECONSIDERATION MOVED by Councillor Dominato*  
*SECONDED BY Councillor Zhou*

*THAT the previous vote be reconsidered.*

*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY*  
*(Councillor Kirby-Yung and Mayor Sim absent for the vote)*

*MOVED by Councillor Dominato*  
*SECONDED BY Councillor Klassen*

*THAT Council recess until 6 pm.*

*CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY*  
*(Councillor Kirby-Yung and Mayor Sim absent for the vote)*

*The Committee recessed at 5:26 pm and reconvened at 6:06 pm.*

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*MOVED by Councillor Maloney*  
*SECONDED by Councillor Dominato*

*THAT the Committee recommend to Council*

*WHEREAS*

1. The only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on Vancouver's roads is zero;
2. Vision Zero is a worldwide movement dedicated to eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries through proven interventions, including safer street design, which is one of the City of Vancouver's core responsibilities [[The Vision Zero Handbook](#)];
3. The City of Vancouver has had an aspirational goal of moving towards zero traffic-related fatalities since 2012 [[Transportation 2040](#)], and approved its Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan in 2016 [[City of Vancouver](#)];
4. Between 2020 and 2024, motorists injured 3,505 cyclists and 3,079 pedestrians in the City of Vancouver. Over the same period, crashes also injured 36,097 vehicle occupants [[ICBC](#)]. Road violence has claimed at least 10 lives per year in this city for every year in the past decade except 2020. The highest number of annual fatalities (22) occurred in 2021;
5. Though crashes hurt drivers and their passengers, injuries to those outside the vehicle are generally more severe. Between 2018 and 2023, pedestrians and

- cyclists accounted for 60% of road fatalities in Vancouver [[VGH Injury Data, VPD](#)];
6. Vehicle speed is the top factor contributing to traffic fatalities in British Columbia. [[ICBC](#)]. Every one km/h speed increase results in a 3% increase in injury-causing crashes, and increases fatalities by 4 to 5% [[Government of British Columbia](#)];
  7. Streets designed to prioritize pedestrian safety encourage active transportation, which improves public health [[Health Canada](#)], reduces traffic congestion, and lowers neighbourhood air and noise pollution;
  8. In 2023, parents or caregivers drove their children to primary school in the City of Vancouver on 27,000 occasions. This number increased 3,000 trips over the previous survey in 2017. Meanwhile, the number of elementary school trips made by bike declined over the same period, from 3,000 in 2017 to 2,000 in 2023 [[Translink](#)]. Road safety concerns are frequently cited as a barrier to walking, biking, or rolling to school, resulting in more children being driven to school than ever before [[About Here](#)];
  9. Though fewer than 20% of the City of Vancouver's residents are seniors, they represent close to half of all pedestrian deaths in traffic crashes [[CoV](#), [Statistics Canada](#)]. Vancouver's population is rapidly aging; between 2016 and 2021, the population of people 65+ was five times that of those under age 65 [[City of Vancouver](#)];
  10. Other British Columbian local governments, such as the District of Saanich, have recently adopted evidence-based plans to reduce traffic violence. The District of Saanich's 2024 Road Safety Action Plan sets a measurable target to cut traffic fatalities and serious injuries in half by 2030, compared with a 2017–2021 baseline, and will regularly update its plan to ensure meaningful progress;
  11. In 2020, the Province of British Columbia released a comprehensive Road Safety Toolkit that aims to help local governments implement evidence-based road-safety strategies [[Government of BC](#)]. The City could consider its recommendations in an updated Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan; and
  12. The City's 2016 Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan has yet to substantially reduce serious injuries and fatalities on Vancouver's roads [[City of Vancouver \(2016\)](#), [City of Vancouver \(2021\)](#), [Vancouver Police Department](#)].

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Vancouver City Council directs staff to:

- i. Review the City's Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan, develop a new Vision Zero Road Safety Policy and Action Plan to reduce motor vehicle deaths and serious injuries to zero in the City of Vancouver, and bring it back to Council in Q2 2026.

- ii. In drafting the policy and action plan, prioritize measures shown to substantially reduce serious traffic injuries and deaths, and eliminate measures that have not proven to be effective.
- iii. Consider work done by other municipalities worldwide throughout the development of the Vision Zero Road Safety Policy and Action Plan, including cities that have achieved Vision Zero, and those that have recently updated their Road Safety Action Plans with steps to achieve it.
- iv. Take into consideration measures that will complement the work currently being undertaken to prevent vehicle incursion into temporary and permanent pedestrianized spaces in the City.
- v. Consult relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to, BC Emergency Health Services, BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit, District Parents' Advisory Councils, HUB Cycling, ICBC, Infrastructure Canada, the Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Transit, Movement, Strong Towns Vancouver, neighbouring municipalities, RoadSafetyBC, Society for Children and Youth of BC, the relevant City advisory committees, TransLink, Transport Canada, Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services, Vancouver Police Department, Vision Zero Vancouver, and the Vancouver School Board.

\* \* \* \* \*

*During debate, Chair Meiszner relinquished the Chair to Vice Chair Dominato in order to introduce an amendment and resumed the Chair once the amendment was dealt with.*

\* \* \* \* \*

AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Meiszner  
SECONDED by Councillor Zhou

THAT clause i) be amended as follows:

- Replacing the words “develop a new” with the words “towards refreshing and renewing the”; and
- Adding the words “to build on the work to date and with the goal of continuous improvement” after the words “Safety Policy and Action Plan”.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10847)  
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

\* \* \* \* \*

*During debate, Chair Meiszner relinquished the Chair to Vice Chair Dominato in order to provide comments on the motion as amended and resumed the Chair once finished.*

\* \* \* \* \*

The amendment having carried, the motion as amended was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (Vote No. 10848) with Mayor Sim absent for the vote.

## FINAL MOTION AS APPROVED

### WHEREAS

1. The only acceptable number of deaths and serious injuries on Vancouver's roads is zero;
2. Vision Zero is a worldwide movement dedicated to eliminating traffic deaths and serious injuries through proven interventions, including safer street design, which is one of the City of Vancouver's core responsibilities [[The Vision Zero Handbook](#)];
3. The City of Vancouver has had an aspirational goal of moving towards zero traffic-related fatalities since 2012 [[Transportation 2040](#)], and approved its Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan in 2016 [[City of Vancouver](#)];
4. Between 2020 and 2024, motorists injured 3,505 cyclists and 3,079 pedestrians in the City of Vancouver. Over the same period, crashes also injured 36,097 vehicle occupants [[ICBC](#)]. Road violence has claimed at least 10 lives per year in this city for every year in the past decade except 2020. The highest number of annual fatalities (22) occurred in 2021;
5. Though crashes hurt drivers and their passengers, injuries to those outside the vehicle are generally more severe. Between 2018 and 2023, pedestrians and cyclists accounted for 60% of road fatalities in Vancouver [[VGH Injury Data, VPD](#)];
6. Vehicle speed is the top factor contributing to traffic fatalities in British Columbia. [[ICBC](#)]. Every one km/h speed increase results in a 3% increase in injury-causing crashes, and increases fatalities by 4 to 5% [[Government of British Columbia](#)];
7. Streets designed to prioritize pedestrian safety encourage active transportation, which improves public health [[Health Canada](#)], reduces traffic congestion, and lowers neighbourhood air and noise pollution;
8. In 2023, parents or caregivers drove their children to primary school in the City of Vancouver on 27,000 occasions. This number increased 3,000 trips over the previous survey in 2017. Meanwhile, the number of elementary school trips made by bike declined over the same period, from 3,000 in 2017 to 2,000 in 2023 [[Translink](#)]. Road safety concerns are frequently cited as a barrier to walking, biking, or rolling to school, resulting in more children being driven to school than ever before [[About Here](#)];
9. Though fewer than 20% of the City of Vancouver's residents are seniors, they represent close to half of all pedestrian deaths in traffic crashes [[CoV](#), [Statistics Canada](#)]. Vancouver's population is rapidly aging; between 2016 and 2021, the

population of people 65+ was five times that of those under age 65 [[City of Vancouver](#)];

10. Other British Columbian local governments, such as the District of Saanich, have recently adopted evidence-based plans to reduce traffic violence. The District of Saanich's 2024 Road Safety Action Plan sets a measurable target to cut traffic fatalities and serious injuries in half by 2030, compared with a 2017–2021 baseline, and will regularly update its plan to ensure meaningful progress;
11. In 2020, the Province of British Columbia released a comprehensive Road Safety Toolkit that aims to help local governments implement evidence-based road-safety strategies [[Government of BC](#)]. The City could consider its recommendations in an updated Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan; and
12. The City's 2016 Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan has yet to substantially reduce serious injuries and fatalities on Vancouver's roads [[City of Vancouver \(2016\)](#), [City of Vancouver \(2021\)](#), [Vancouver Police Department](#)].

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Vancouver City Council directs staff to:

- i. Review the City's Moving Towards Zero Safety Action Plan towards refreshing and renewing the Vision Zero Road Safety Policy and Action Plan to build on the work to date and with the goal of continuous improvement, in order to reduce motor vehicle deaths and serious injuries to zero in the City of Vancouver and bring it back to Council in Q2 2026.
- ii. In drafting the policy and action plan, prioritize measures shown to substantially reduce serious traffic injuries and deaths, and eliminate measures that have not proven to be effective.
- iii. Consider work done by other municipalities worldwide throughout the development of the Vision Zero Road Safety Policy and Action Plan, including cities that have achieved Vision Zero, and those that have recently updated their Road Safety Action Plans with steps to achieve it.
- iv. Take into consideration measures that will complement the work currently being undertaken to prevent vehicle incursion into temporary and permanent pedestrianized spaces in the City.
- v. Consult relevant stakeholders including, but not limited to, BC Emergency Health Services, BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit, District Parents' Advisory Councils, HUB Cycling, ICBC, Infrastructure Canada, the Provincial Ministry of Transportation and Transit, Movement, Strong Towns Vancouver, neighbouring municipalities, RoadSafetyBC, Society for Children and Youth of BC, the relevant City advisory committees, TransLink, Transport Canada, Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services, Vancouver Police Department, Vision Zero Vancouver, and the Vancouver School Board.

## **5. Unlocking the Creative and Economic Potential of Vancouver's Railtown District**

The Committee heard from 11 speakers who spoke in support of the motion.

MOVED by Councillor Bligh

SECONDED by Councillor Zhou

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

### **WHEREAS**

1. Vancouver's Railtown District is a unique and historically significant part of the city with a rich industrial past. It once served as the industrial heart of the city supporting the port, the railroad, and other vital industries such as fishing and logging;
2. Railtown is currently designated as "Industrial" under Metro Vancouver's 2050 Regional Growth Strategy and zoned as I-4 Industrial by the City of Vancouver;
3. Railtown is within walking distance to Waterfront Station, Vancouver's largest multi-modal transit hub, and is less than 75 metres from the Tier 3 Transit-Oriented Area boundary;
4. Some of Vancouver's largest and most successful homegrown companies, such as Aritzia, Inform, Bocci, Hootsuite, and Herschel, have started in Railtown as part of an emergent creative district that has coalesced in the area drawn by the central location and unique vibe of this space;<sup>6</sup>
5. The Railtown District encompasses approximately 11 acres of land with approximately 800,000 sq/ft of leasable commercial space but faces numerous challenges in terms of industrial land uses in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. For example, many of Railtown's historic buildings do not conform to modern industrial space requirements due to a lack of proper loading bays, freight elevators, low ceilings, insufficient space for parking (let alone truck parking and yard storage), limited opportunities for future expansion, and challenges for large trucks to access major transportation routes and maneuver safely which results in high vacancy rates amongst industrial-focused buildings;
6. Many of Railtown's historic buildings are at risk of demolition due to Railtown being one of the last commercial districts in the city with a continuous streetscape of pre-1930s buildings that are not protected under the City's Heritage Conservation By-laws;
7. Employers in Railtown advise that the area suffers from poor east west connections and that a review of and updates to the transportation network would help facilitate employee retention and employment growth in the area (including active transportation routes such as the Portside Greenway);

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<sup>6</sup> Bocci has announced plans to move further east due to Railtown's logistical limitations.

8. Railtown currently struggles with prolonged and excessively high vacancy rates. For example, the overall vacancy rate in the area is 13.2% and the vacancy rate in industrial spaces is 31%<sup>7</sup>. This is very high compared to the industrial vacancy rate in the region overall (3.8% in Q1 2025)<sup>8</sup>. Local building managers have advised that vacancy rates in the area are purposefully under reported to help prevent commercial lease rates from falling further;
9. Landowners in the area report that lease rates have dropped 50% from \$35 PSF in 2020 to \$15 PSF in 2025;
10. Railtown is experiencing a decline in the number of businesses with a 31% decrease in business licenses since 2014 coinciding with the implementation of new I-4 zoning;
11. Area landowners report that Railtown is over-reliant on a single employer who makes up 70% (~2,500) jobs in the area. Many businesses have expressed concern over the deterioration of the area and are considering relocating outside of Railtown;
12. Landowners in the area report that Railtown is lagging behind similar neighbourhoods, for example between 2018 and 2024 Mount Pleasant's total building permit value was \$254m while Railtown's total building permit value was \$57m, representing almost a 4x value when compared to Railtown;
13. Landowners further report that 266,000 sq/ft of projects with approved development applications have been abandoned due to lack of viability under the current policy restrictions, pointing to a need and opportunity to align Railtown's heritage with other successfully reimagined former industrial areas that have brought heritage and modern uses together;
14. As part of the approval of updates to the City's Industrial Lands Policy in 2023, staff recommended that Railtown be subject to future work to enable opportunities for expansion of employment uses in the area;
15. Residential uses already exist along Railway and Alexander Streets, including 45 artist live/work units at 303 Railway (CD) and 15 at 329 Railway (I-4); 120 live/work and condo units at The Edge (298 Alexander, CD); and a concentration of social and supportive housing, such as the City-owned 45-unit SRO at 305 Alexander (I-4), the 66-unit Jim Green Residence (CD), and the shelter at 467 Alexander (I-4). The 60 artist live/work studios at 303 Railway Street (CD) and 329 Railway Street (grandfathered in under I-4) are reported to have a 0% vacancy rate;
16. Diversified housing options, including residential rental and artist live/work, are critical to support employment, and creating mixed-use is consistent with the City of Vancouver's priorities of a 15-minute walkable city;

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<sup>7</sup> CoStar.

<sup>8</sup> Avison Young.

17. Mixed-use neighbourhoods is consistent with the City of Vancouver's priorities of a 15-minute walkable city;
18. There is broad support from local property owners, businesses, and community partners to reclassify the area and unlock new housing, jobs, and cultural amenities. The Railtown Coalition represents property owners that make up a total of 87% of the land within the I-4 zoning district and they support this reclassification;
19. The Railtown Coalition representing 87% of Railtown's land base (~430,000 sq. ft.) is ready to work with the Planning Department to deliver sustainable, mixed-use projects that create rental and artist housing without displacement, increase employment spaces and services, and deliver public realm improvements consistent with a master-planned and complete community. The coalition is committed to ensuring these projects recognize the cultural diversity and resilience of the Downtown Eastside, host Nations and urban Indigenous communities and are ready to work with all partners to ensure future development respects stakeholder rights, histories, and priorities;
20. Given Railtown's small land area and exclusive I-4 zoning (not found anywhere else), reclassification would allow for vitalization bringing a range of employment opportunities and increased foot traffic to support local businesses and create new services including public realm and cultural spaces; and
21. Reclassifying sites within Railtown from Industrial to General Urban in Metro Vancouver's Regional Land Use Designations is essential to supporting mixed-use development in the area. This shift would allow for a broader mix of housing, employment space, artist live/work opportunities, and vibrant public spaces. It is a critical step toward realizing Railtown's creative and economic potential, fostering innovation, artistic expression, and entrepreneurship, while advancing the city's goals for economic diversification, cultural development, housing, and urban revitalization.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Council direct staff to bring back options for Council's consideration as part of the ongoing local area planning for the Railtown District, including but not limited to potential zoning changes and options for mixed-use development such as creating additional artist live-work spaces, rental housing, new employment spaces, creative manufacturing spaces for industrial start-ups, and more vibrant streetscapes;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to incorporate the following considerations as part of the future Railtown Planning work:

- Increased employment with no net loss of the total inventory of industrial or employment space currently found in Railtown;
- Transportation network enhancements for safe and active transport options in and out of the area including better connections to the Gastown and Strathcona Shopping Districts and work with TransLink to explore the potential re-routing

of key bus services into the Railtown area or providing alternative connections to Waterfront Station and other transit hubs;

- Retail at grade, increased vibrancy, safety, eyes on the streets and 24/7 activity;
- Increased & diversified housing options including market rental housing and live/work rental options;
- Consider which sites are best suitable for rental housing and artist live/work spaces;
- Heritage protection and creative uses in heritage buildings such as live/work spaces including the possibility of transferring density to other zones in the city and incentives for the preservation of heritage buildings;
- Increase the overall flexibility of uses;

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to initiate the work necessary for the reclassification of Railtown sites from (I-4) “Industrial” to “General Urban”, where an area planning opportunity is identified, and bring a referral report forward to amend the Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan (RCS ODP) for Council’s consideration and pending council approval, initiate the work with Metro Vancouver Regional Board to subsequently amend the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy 2050 as required.

amended

AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Kirby-Yung  
SECONDED by Councillor Klassen

THAT in the first clause, the word “rental” be struck and replaced by the words “a diversity of”;

FURTHER THAT the second clause be amended as follows:

- Adding the words “Industrial and Employment Lands Framework updates, including current” before the words “Railtown Planning work” in the first sentence;
- Adding the words “and intensification of industrial land uses that a) respect the genesis and evolution of Railtown as a successful incubator hub for creative startups, b) honours Railtown’s impactful role as an employment driver in the city, and c) results in” after the words “Increased employment” in the first bullet point;
- Removing the words “including market rental housing and live/work rental options” from the fourth bullet point;

- Replacing the fifth bullet point with “Consider which sites may be suitable for a diversity of housing options”;
- Adding the words “of Railtown’s continuous streetscape of pre-1930s buildings not currently protected under the City’s Heritage Conservation By-laws” after the words “Heritage protection” in the sixth bullet point;
- Replacing the word “creative” with the words “consideration of compatible” in the sixth bullet point;
- Replacing the word “uses” with the words “Railtown’s creative, industrial, and employment land uses and its unique role as an employment driver in the city’s economy” in the last bullet point;

AND FURTHER THAT in the last clause, adding the words “along with planning opportunities for other Industrial and Employment lands,” before the words “bring a referral report”.

amended

AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Bligh  
SECONDED by Councillor Maloney

THAT in the first bullet point of the second clause, the words “and intensification” be replaced by “considerations for possible intensification”.

CARRIED (No. 10849)  
(Councillors Kirby-Yung and Montague opposed)  
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

The amendment to the amendment having carried, the amendment as amended was put and CARRIED (Vote No. 10850) with Councillors Maloney and Orr opposed, Councillor Fry abstaining from the vote, and Mayor Sim absent for the vote.

\* \* \* \* \*

*During debate, Chair Meiszner relinquished the Chair to Vice Chair Dominato in order to provide comments on the motion as amended and resumed the Chair once finished.*

\* \* \* \* \*

The amendments having carried, the motion as amended was put and CARRIED (Vote No. 10851) with Councillor Orr opposed and Mayor Sim absent for the vote.

## FINAL MOTION AS APPROVED

### WHEREAS

1. Vancouver's Railtown District is a unique and historically significant part of the city with a rich industrial past. It once served as the industrial heart of the city supporting the port, the railroad, and other vital industries such as fishing and logging;
2. Railtown is currently designated as "Industrial" under Metro Vancouver's 2050 Regional Growth Strategy and zoned as I-4 Industrial by the City of Vancouver;
3. Railtown is within walking distance to Waterfront Station, Vancouver's largest multi-modal transit hub, and is less than 75 metres from the Tier 3 Transit-Oriented Area boundary;
4. Some of Vancouver's largest and most successful homegrown companies, such as Aritzia, Inform, Bocci, Hootsuite, and Herschel, have started in Railtown as part of an emergent creative district that has coalesced in the area drawn by the central location and unique vibe of this space;<sup>9</sup>
5. The Railtown District encompasses approximately 11 acres of land with approximately 800,000 sq/ft of leasable commercial space but faces numerous challenges in terms of industrial land uses in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. For example, many of Railtown's historic buildings do not conform to modern industrial space requirements due to a lack of proper loading bays, freight elevators, low ceilings, insufficient space for parking (let alone truck parking and yard storage), limited opportunities for future expansion, and challenges for large trucks to access major transportation routes and maneuver safely which results in high vacancy rates amongst industrial-focused buildings;
6. Many of Railtown's historic buildings are at risk of demolition due to Railtown being one of the last commercial districts in the city with a continuous streetscape of pre-1930s buildings that are not protected under the City's Heritage Conservation By-laws;
7. Employers in Railtown advise that the area suffers from poor east west connections and that a review of and updates to the transportation network would help facilitate employee retention and employment growth in the area (including active transportation routes such as the Portside Greenway);
8. Railtown currently struggles with prolonged and excessively high vacancy rates. For example, the overall vacancy rate in the area is 13.2% and the vacancy rate in industrial spaces is 31%<sup>10</sup>. This is very high compared to the industrial vacancy rate in the region overall (3.8% in Q1 2025)<sup>11</sup>. Local building managers

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<sup>9</sup> Bocci has announced plans to move further east due to Railtown's logistical limitations.

<sup>10</sup> CoStar.

<sup>11</sup> Avison Young.

have advised that vacancy rates in the area are purposefully under reported to help prevent commercial lease rates from falling further;

9. Landowners in the area report that lease rates have dropped 50% from \$35 PSF in 2020 to \$15 PSF in 2025;
10. Railtown is experiencing a decline in the number of businesses with a 31% decrease in business licenses since 2014 coinciding with the implementation of new I-4 zoning;
11. Area landowners report that Railtown is over-reliant on a single employer who makes up 70% (~2,500) jobs in the area. Many businesses have expressed concern over the deterioration of the area and are considering relocating outside of Railtown;
12. Landowners in the area report that Railtown is lagging behind similar neighbourhoods, for example between 2018 and 2024 Mount Pleasant's total building permit value was \$254m while Railtown's total building permit value was \$57m, representing almost a 4x value when compared to Railtown;
13. Landowners further report that 266,000 sq/ft of projects with approved development applications have been abandoned due to lack of viability under the current policy restrictions, pointing to a need and opportunity to align Railtown's heritage with other successfully reimagined former industrial areas that have brought heritage and modern uses together;
14. As part of the approval of updates to the City's Industrial Lands Policy in 2023, staff recommended that Railtown be subject to future work to enable opportunities for expansion of employment uses in the area;
15. Residential uses already exist along Railway and Alexander Streets, including 45 artist live/work units at 303 Railway (CD) and 15 at 329 Railway (I-4); 120 live/work and condo units at The Edge (298 Alexander, CD); and a concentration of social and supportive housing, such as the City-owned 45-unit SRO at 305 Alexander (I-4), the 66-unit Jim Green Residence (CD), and the shelter at 467 Alexander (I-4). The 60 artist live/work studios at 303 Railway Street (CD) and 329 Railway Street (grandfathered in under I-4) are reported to have a 0% vacancy rate;
16. Diversified housing options, including residential rental and artist live/work, are critical to support employment, and creating mixed-use is consistent with the City of Vancouver's priorities of a 15-minute walkable city;
17. Mixed-use neighbourhoods is consistent with the City of Vancouver's priorities of a 15-minute walkable city;
18. There is broad support from local property owners, businesses, and community partners to reclassify the area and unlock new housing, jobs, and cultural amenities. The Railtown Coalition represents property owners that make up a

total of 87% of the land within the I-4 zoning district and they support this reclassification;

19. The Railtown Coalition representing 87% of Railtown's land base (~430,000 sq. ft.) is ready to work with the Planning Department to deliver sustainable, mixed-use projects that create rental and artist housing without displacement, increase employment spaces and services, and deliver public realm improvements consistent with a master-planned and complete community. The coalition is committed to ensuring these projects recognize the cultural diversity and resilience of the Downtown Eastside, host Nations and urban Indigenous communities and are ready to work with all partners to ensure future development respects stakeholder rights, histories, and priorities;
20. Given Railtown's small land area and exclusive I-4 zoning (not found anywhere else), reclassification would allow for vitalization bringing a range of employment opportunities and increased foot traffic to support local businesses and create new services including public realm and cultural spaces; and
21. Reclassifying sites within Railtown from Industrial to General Urban in Metro Vancouver's Regional Land Use Designations is essential to supporting mixed-use development in the area. This shift would allow for a broader mix of housing, employment space, artist live/work opportunities, and vibrant public spaces. It is a critical step toward realizing Railtown's creative and economic potential, fostering innovation, artistic expression, and entrepreneurship, while advancing the city's goals for economic diversification, cultural development, housing, and urban revitalization.

#### THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Council direct staff to bring back options for Council's consideration as part of the ongoing local area planning for the Railtown District, including but not limited to potential zoning changes and options for mixed-use development such as creating additional artist live-work spaces, a diversity of housing, new employment spaces, creative manufacturing spaces for industrial start-ups, and more vibrant streetscapes;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to incorporate the following considerations as part of the future Industrial and Employment Lands Framework updates, including current Railtown Planning work:

- Increased employment, considerations for possible intensification of industrial land uses that a) respect the genesis and evolution of Railtown as a successful incubator hub for creative startups, b) honours Railtown's impactful role as an employment driver in the city, and c) results in no net loss of the total inventory of industrial or employment space currently found in Railtown;
- Transportation network enhancements for safe and active transport options in and out of the area including better connections to the Gastown and Strathcona Shopping Districts and work with TransLink to explore the potential re-routing of

key bus services into the Railtown area or providing alternative connections to Waterfront Station and other transit hubs;

- Retail at grade, increased vibrancy, safety, eyes on the streets and 24/7 activity;
- Increased & diversified housing options;
- Consider which sites may be suitable for a diversity of housing options;
- Heritage protection of Railtown's continuous streetscape of pre-1930s buildings not currently protected under the City's Heritage Conservation By-laws and consideration of compatible uses in heritage buildings such as live/work spaces including the possibility of transferring density to other zones in the city and incentives for the preservation of heritage buildings;
- Increase the overall flexibility of Railtown's creative, industrial, and employment land uses and its unique role as an employment driver in the city's economy;

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to initiate the work necessary for the reclassification of Railtown sites from (I-4) "Industrial" to "General Urban", where an area planning opportunity is identified, and, along with planning opportunities for other Industrial and Employment lands, bring a referral report forward to amend the Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan (RCS ODP) for Council's consideration and pending council approval, initiate the work with Metro Vancouver Regional Board to subsequently amend the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy 2050 as required.

## **6. FCM 2028 Annual Conference Bid**

MOVED by Councillor Bligh

SECONDED by Councillor Dominato

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

### **WHEREAS**

1. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference brings together municipal leaders from across Canada to share knowledge, shape national policy, and strengthen intergovernmental partnerships;
2. Vancouver previously hosted the FCM Conference in 1998 and 2013, both of which were highly successful and positioned the city as a leader in sustainability, affordable housing, and civic innovation;
3. Hosting an FCM Annual Conference would generate significant economic and reputational benefits for Vancouver, while reinforcing the city's national leadership on pressing issues such as public safety, climate action, housing, and economic development;

4. With Edmonton and Halifax confirmed to host the 2026 and 2027 conferences, respectively, Vancouver now has a timely and strategic opportunity to submit a competitive bid for a future FCM Annual Conference;
5. The costs incurred by the City of Vancouver in hosting the 2013 FCM conference totalled approximately \$1.2M and were covered by a reserve that had been established by Council commencing in 2007; and
6. Edmonton is budgeting \$1.6M to host the 2026 conference. While the conference is expected to generate revenues to offset costs, the expenditures are incurred in the period leading up to the event and the City would need a funding source to cover such costs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council affirm its interest in hosting an upcoming FCM Annual Conference in Vancouver.
- B. THAT Staff engage with FCM, Destination Vancouver, local business and community partners, and relevant civic departments to develop a comprehensive proposal that demonstrates Vancouver's capacity – including venue availability, accommodations, transportation, and event experience – as well as the City's vision and leadership on key national priorities such as public safety, climate action, housing, and economic development.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to report back on a potential bid submission with cost estimates and funding options for hosting a future conference, should Vancouver be selected.

amended

AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Fry  
SECONDED by Councillor Bligh

THAT in B, the word "comprehensive" be struck.

CARRIED (Vote No. 10852)  
(Councillors Kirby-Yung, Klassen and Montague opposed)  
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

\* \* \* \* \*

*During debate, Chair Meiszner relinquished the Chair to Vice Chair Dominato in order to Introduce an amendment and resumed the Chair once the amendment was dealt with.*

\* \* \* \* \*

AMENDMENT MOVED by Councillor Meiszner  
SECONDED by Councillor Fry

THAT the following be added as D:

THAT as part of the report back, city staff outline the specific cost of recent FCM conferences, held since Vancouver last hosted the conference in 2013, and specifically the outline costs incurred by those cities of hosting the FCM conference; and the amount that was recouped through conference revenues that flowed to each city, in order for council to make a fully informed and fiscally responsible decision.

CARRIED (Vote No. 10853)  
(Councillors Kirby-Yung, Klassen and Montague opposed)  
(Mayor Sim absent for the vote)

\* \* \* \* \*

*During debate, Chair Meiszner relinquished the Chair to Vice Chair Dominato in order to provide comments on the motion as amended and resumed the Chair once finished.*

\* \* \* \* \*

The amendments having carried, the motion as amended was put and CARRIED (Vote No. 10854) with Councillors Kirby-Yung, Klassen, Montague, Orr opposed, Councillor Zhou abstaining from the vote, and Mayor Sim absent for the vote.

## **FINAL MOTION AS APPROVED**

### **WHEREAS**

1. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference brings together municipal leaders from across Canada to share knowledge, shape national policy, and strengthen intergovernmental partnerships;
2. Vancouver previously hosted the FCM Conference in 1998 and 2013, both of which were highly successful and positioned the city as a leader in sustainability, affordable housing, and civic innovation;
3. Hosting an FCM Annual Conference would generate significant economic and reputational benefits for Vancouver, while reinforcing the city's national leadership on pressing issues such as public safety, climate action, housing, and economic development;
4. With Edmonton and Halifax confirmed to host the 2026 and 2027 conferences, respectively, Vancouver now has a timely and strategic opportunity to submit a competitive bid for a future FCM Annual Conference;
5. The costs incurred by the City of Vancouver in hosting the 2013 FCM conference totalled approximately \$1.2M and were covered by a reserve that had been established by Council commencing in 2007; and

6. Edmonton is budgeting \$1.6M to host the 2026 conference. While the conference is expected to generate revenues to offset costs, the expenditures are incurred in the period leading up to the event and the City would need a funding source to cover such costs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council affirm its interest in hosting an upcoming FCM Annual Conference in Vancouver.
- B. THAT Staff engage with FCM, Destination Vancouver, local business and community partners, and relevant civic departments to develop a proposal that demonstrates Vancouver's capacity – including venue availability, accommodations, transportation, and event experience – as well as the City's vision and leadership on key national priorities such as public safety, climate action, housing, and economic development.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to report back on a potential bid submission with cost estimates and funding options for hosting a future conference, should Vancouver be selected.
- D. THAT as part of the report back, city staff outline the specific cost of recent FCM conferences, held since Vancouver last hosted the conference in 2013, and specifically the outline costs incurred by those cities of hosting the FCM conference; and the amount that was recouped through conference revenues that flowed to each city, in order for council to make a fully informed and fiscally responsible decision.

The Committee adjourned at 8:59 pm.

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**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON  
POLICY AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

**JULY 9, 2025**

A meeting of the Council of the City of Vancouver was held on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at 9:00 pm, in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall, following the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting, to consider the recommendations and actions of the Committee.

**PRESENT:**

Acting Mayor Mike Klassen  
Councillor Rebecca Bligh  
Councillor Lisa Dominato  
Councillor Pete Fry  
Councillor Sarah Kirby-Yung  
Councillor Lucy Maloney  
Councillor Peter Meiszner  
Councillor Brian Montague  
Councillor Sean Orr  
Councillor Lenny Zhou

**ABSENT:**

Mayor Ken Sim (Leave of Absence – Civic Business)

**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:**

Paul Mochrie, City Manager

**CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:**

Tina Penney, Deputy City Clerk  
Julie Emmerson, Meeting Coordinator  
David Yim, Meeting Coordinator

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Report of Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities  
Wednesday, July 9, 2025

Council considered the report containing the recommendations and actions taken by the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities. Its items of business included:

**Presentations:**

1. 2025 Annual Transportation and Public Space Directors' Update

**Reports:**

1. Safer Slower Streets
2. New Edition of the Fire By-law (2025 Fire By-law)
3. 2025 Community Services, Childcare & Other Grants
4. Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan Implementation Grant Program Allocation 2025
5. 2025 Graffiti Abatement Grants for Business Improvement Areas
7. Contract Award for Operator for Kitsilano Beach Restaurant

8. Change Orders for Consulting Services for ServiceNow Resources Augmentation

Council Members' Motions:

1. Declaring Housing as a Human Right
2. From Vacancy to Vitality: Launching a Temporary Use Pilot for Empty Storefronts in the Downtown Eastside
3. Opening Doors: Expanding Ownership Options for Laneway and Backyard Homes
4. Developing a Vision Zero Road Safety Policy and Action Plan
5. Unlocking the Creative and Economic Potential of Vancouver's Railtown District
6. FCM 2028 Annual Conference Bid

MOVED by Councillor Meiszner

SECONDED by Councillor Montague

THAT the recommendations and actions taken by the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities at its meeting of July 9, 2025, as contained in Presentation 1, Reports 1 to 5, 7, 8, and Council Members' Motions 1 to 6, be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**ADJOURNMENT**

MOVED by Councillor Montague

SECONDED by Councillor Meiszner

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Council adjourned at 9:01 pm.

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