



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: May 5, 2026  
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Meeting Date: June 3, 2026  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities  
FROM: General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability  
SUBJECT: Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan Implementation Grant Program Allocation 2026

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve the matching grant allocation of \$610,051 to 17 Downtown Eastside (DTES) non-profit organizations to advance the social, economic and environmental objectives of the DTES Plan, as detailed in Appendix A. Source of funds from the previously approved multi-year capital project budget, \$513,051 in 2023 – 26 DTES Plan Matching Grants and \$97,000 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 this report that is not otherwise a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency to be contributing to the culture of beautification, health, or 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 Recommendations A to D above unless and until the applicable grant agreement or letter of agreement is approved by the City in accordance with Recommendation C above and executed and delivered by both the grant recipient and GM of PDS (or their designate).

Approval of the grant recommendations above requires at least 2/3 affirmative votes of all Council members under Section 206 (1) of the *Vancouver Charter*.

## Purpose and Executive Summary

Council approved the Downtown Eastside (DTES) Plan in March 2014 setting out the policies, strategies, quick-start and short-term actions needed to achieve the long-term vision that:

***“the neighbourhood will be made up of mixed-income communities with a range of affordable housing options (including social housing) for all residents, local serving commerce, social services and cultural activities where all feel welcome, valued and at home”.***

This Vancouver-based non-profit organizations operating in the DTES are invited to submit a grant application once a year. A total of 20 applications were submitted in 2026. This report recommends 17 grants to 17 non-profit agencies totaling \$610,051 to provide critical assistance and support community initiatives in a timely way to benefit marginalized DTES residents, consistent with the implementation strategy in the DTES Plan.

These grant allocations support an integrated vision of health and well-being in the DTES and will help the City address systemic barriers experienced by the community due to the compounding intersections of poverty, racism and colonialism.

The recommended projects align with the Healthy City Strategy, as well as the City’s social sustainability framework and related initiatives, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Strategy, the Reconciliation Framework, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) Response, and the Equity Framework. These projects will also support actions in the DTES Community Economic Development (CED) Strategy and the Chinatown Cultural Heritage Asset Management Plan (CHAMP) Strategic Framework.

## Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- [Healthy City Strategy](#) (2026).
- [Chinatown Cultural District Framework](#) (2024).
- [Accessibility Strategy Phase II: Multiyear Action Plan](#) (2024).
- [Vibrant Vancouver: City Council’s Strategic Priorities 2023-2026](#) (2023).
- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\) Strategy](#) (2022).
- [Equity Framework](#) (2021).
- [Downtown Eastside Community Economic Development Strategy](#) (2016).
- [Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan](#) (2014).

## City Manager’s Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

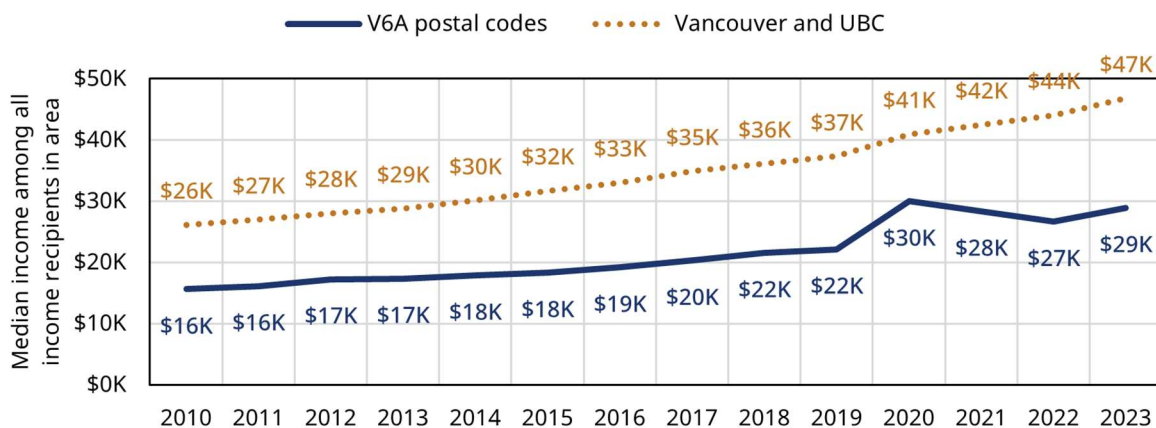
## Context and Background

### Community Context

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) is located on the traditional, unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm Indian Band, Skwxwú7mesh and səliłwətaʔ Nations, and comprises the seven mixed income neighbourhoods of Gastown, Victory Square, Chinatown, DTES Oppenheimer District, Thornton Park, Strathcona, and the Industrial Lands.

Individuals in the DTES have for many years had a lower median annual income than people in other parts of Vancouver. Median income in V6A postal codes (which closely match the DTES boundaries) was \$29,000 in 2023, nearly 40% lower than the citywide median of \$47,000. Income supports during the COVID-19 pandemic reduced the gap, but it has widened again in the years following the pandemic. Despite the high level of poverty and vulnerability, the DTES is a creative, diverse area with close-knit communities and cultural amenities.

### Median Individual Income, 2010-2023



Data source: Statistics Canada, T1 Family File (income tax returns), data accessed through Community Data Program



Figure 1. Median Individual Income (2010-2023). Statistics Canada.

### DTES Plan Implementation Grants

The DTES Plan provides the 30-year vision, strategies, and policies needed to achieve a better quality of life for the residents, and to improve opportunities for businesses and industries. The DTES Plan Implementation Grants focus on four key priority areas: (1) supporting neighbourhood improvements and community building; (2) fostering community economic development; (3) protecting valuable community assets; and (4) strategic projects. The objective is to build partnerships with non-profit organizations, charities, social enterprises, Societies and Business Improvement Associations to advance the City’s social, economic and ecological sustainability objectives for the DTES.

Applications are invited through an open call once a year. Information on the DTES Plan Implementation Grants is listed on the City’s website. Email notifications about the open call are sent to an extensive list of non-profits in the DTES, including small grass-roots organizations. Staff are available to answer applicants’ questions and to receive feedback on the application process. Staff review all applications for completeness and to ensure they meet eligibility requirements. An interdepartmental staff team then conducts detailed reviews using grant criteria established in alignment with the DTES Plan priorities, the Social Impact Objectives and the quick start actions and short-term projects of the Plan (Appendix C). Staff also work closely with staff administering other City grant programs to maximize the collective impact of the City’s investments. At the end of the grant cycle, grantees are required to complete a report outlining the outcomes of the project and submit invoices showing how City funds were spent.

Since the plan’s adoption, the City has approved more than 330 grants, providing \$13.7 million to non-profit organizations and social enterprises. The benefits include a wide spectrum of improvements to workspaces, critical repairs to aging historic and heritage buildings, acquisition of furniture and equipment, creation of low barrier jobs, preparation of feasibility studies, needs assessments, and business plans.

## Discussion

### DTES Plan Implementation Grants

The 17 grants recommended in this report align with Council priorities and strategies (see Appendix A). Most of the recommended grants relate to Community Asset Management, Community Economic Development and Strategic Projects, including interventions addressing equity, space improvements, low-barrier employment and access to spaces for non-profit organizations and local-serving businesses. The funding distribution of the recommended grant applications is summarised in Table 1. Three applications are not recommended for funding (see Appendix B).

**Table 1: Recommended DTES Plan Implementation Grant allocations by funding area.**

<b>Funding Area</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b># of Grants</b>	<b>% of Grants</b>	<b>Total funding</b>
Community Asset Management	A vibrant and inclusive economy through Community Economic Development.	10	59%	\$322,287
Community Economic Development	Retention and improvement of valuable assets identified in the DTES plan and Social Impact Assessment.	4	23%	\$140,764
Neighbourhood Improvements	Improvements to the neighbourhood places and spaces for community wellbeing, safety, and walkability.	1	6%	\$50,000
Strategic Projects	Supporting strategic interventions to respond to community needs.	2	12%	\$97,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$610,051</b>

**Financial Implications**

The total dollar amount of DTES Plan Implementation Grants being recommended is \$610,051. These initiatives are funded from the previously approved multi-year capital project budget, \$513,051 in the 2023-26 DTES Plan Implementation Matching Grants and \$97,000 in the 2023-26 DTES Plan Strategic Projects Grants. If approved, the amount remaining in the 2023-2026 Capital Plan for these two programs is approximately \$0.5 Million.

Following Council approval of the recommended grants, Terms of Reference documents will be signed between the applicants and the City of Vancouver outlining the terms and conditions for each grant release.

**Legal Implications**

If the Recommendations in this report are adopted, Council will authorize the grants detailed in Appendix A.

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**APPENDIX A**  
**DTES Plan Implementation Grants (Recommended)**

No	Organization	Project Description	Outcomes	Quick Starts (Appendix C)	Amount Recomm-ended	Conditions
1	Chau Luen Kon Sol Society Vancouver	Capital improvements to low-income social housing, including power washing, painting interior/exterior, and re-roofing of 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor.	Improved safety, visibility, and welcoming environment for seniors and low-income residents.	Well-Being (A3), Housing (B3)	\$50,000	
2	Strathcona Business Improvement Association	Undertake a feasibility study to establish a neighbourhood grocery store in an underused East Hastings building.	A plan to activate an underused storefront, increase access to affordable food, and create local jobs.	Well-Being (A2), Economy (C3, C8, C9)	\$26,500	
3	Community Impact Real Estate Society	Retail space and facade improvements of the Washington Community Market.	Safety infrastructure upgraded, including community-engaged art, for a safer and welcoming space for patrons and staff.	Well-Being (A2, A3), Economy (C8)	\$11,500	
4	Hastings Crossing Business Improvement Association	Undertake a feasibility study for a community-centered business incubator, and public realm improvements.	Expand inclusive economic opportunities and strengthen neighbourhood vibrancy by supporting emerging food entrepreneurs and enhancing public spaces.	Economy (C2, C3, C4), Community Placemaking (F1)	\$50,000	
5	The Downtown Eastside Women's Centre Association	Space renovations at 161 E Hastings for additional programming and meeting space benefiting homeless and precariously housed women.	Additional programming and meeting space for homeless and precariously housed women.	Well-being (A1, A3)	\$50,000	Submission of quotes to confirm scope of work.

6	Union Gospel Mission	Infrastructure upgrades to plumbing systems at three UGM sites - 601 E Hastings, 616 E Cordova and Maurice McElrea Place.	Prevention of system failures and protection of essential sanitary services across UGM sites.	Well-being (A1, A3)	\$14,000	
7	Vancouver Buddhist Temple	Capital repairs to the building to improve safety, functionality, and comfort.	Provision of better community and working environment to all areas for community use.	Well-being (A1, A3), Arts, Culture & Heritage (D2, D4)	\$25,587	
8	Mission Possible Compassionate Ministries Society	Capital and equipment upgrades to improve accessibility and operations of the Employment Readiness Program at 648 E Hastings.	Improved equipment and accessibility to expand ERP capacity and operations.	Well-being (A1, A3), Economy (C6, C8, C9)	\$29,064	
9	221A Artist Run Centre Society	Replace a gate and install a bench at ɣawš shewáɣ新生林 New Growth Garden to improve safety and accessibility.	Improved safety, accessibility for programming and the community.	Well-being (A1, A3), Arts, Culture & Heritage (D2, D4), Parks & Open Space (E1)	\$24,000	
10	Eastside Arts Society	Enhance the Eastside Arts District website to strengthen connections and visibility of cultural assets, artists and residents.	Increased the visibility and connectivity of cultural assets and improved economic opportunities for DTES artists.	Economy (C7, C8), Arts, Culture & Heritage (D4)	\$47,000	
11	Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver	Health and safety upgrades to the Museum and Archives.	Improved health and safety of the space to deliver programs and ensure public safety.	Well-being (A1, A3), Economy (C8), Arts, Culture & Heritage (D1, D2, D4)	\$50,000	
12	Vancouver Chinatown Foundation for Community Revitalization	Infrastructure repairs and security upgrades at the May Wah Hotel and Chinatown Storytelling Centre.	Improved affordable commercial spaces for small businesses and cultural spaces in Chinatown.	Well-being (A3), Economy (C3, C8) Arts, Culture & Heritage (D2, D4)	\$50,000	

13	Powell Street Festival	Purchase of portable production, technical, and office equipment to support the Powell Street Festival.	Expanded capacity to deliver arts and cultural programming in the DTES.	Well-Being (A1, A3), Economy (C8, C9), Arts, Culture & Heritage (D4)	\$34,200	
14	Uya'am Gaak Cultural Society	Build and repair garden beds at V6A Gardens.	Improved capacity to produce traditional food and medicine, deliver cultural programs, and provide access to green space.	Well-Being (A1, A2, A3), Economy (C8), Arts, Culture & Heritage (D2, D4)	\$23,000	Confirmation of other sources of funding.
15	Strathcona Vineyard Church	Washroom upgrades to improve accessibility and inclusiveness of a shared community-serving space.	Upgraded universal accessible washroom for seniors and people with mobility aids.	Well-Being (A1, A3)	\$40,000	
16	Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society (EMBERS)	Modernization of EMBERS' social enterprise operations through technology transformation.	Implementation of integrated technology platforms to improve local job placements.	Economy (C6, C8, C9)	\$35,200	
17	PHS Community Services Society	Capital renovations and upgrades at 15 W Cordova to establish a kitchen that supports meal production for DTES residents.	Increased meal production to serve residents of PHS Supportive Housing, PHS shelters, VCH affiliated programs, and low-income DTES residents.	Well-Being (A1, A2)	\$50,000	
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$610,051</b>	

**APPENDIX B**  
**DTES Plan Implementation Grants (Not Recommended)**

No	Organization	Project Description	Amount Requested	Comments
1	Downtown Eastside Community Land Trust	Façade revitalization of the Powell Rooms SRO.	\$15,000.00	This project is more appropriate under the SRO Upgrade Grants.
2	Lina HoHo Restaurant Inc.	Base-building upgrades at 87 E Pender to meet current safety codes and enable the safe reopening of the historic Ho Ho Restaurant.	\$50,000.00	Applicant is ineligible under the DTES Plan Implementation Grant guidelines.
3	Lung Kong Tien Yee Association	Renovation at the Sun Ah Hotel to improve safety, habitability and overall living conditions of residents.	\$50,000.00	Applicant did not meet 50% matching fund requirement. Multiple grant applications have been approved through the DTES Capital Grant totalling \$197,000. These grants are still active.

## APPENDIX C Quick Start Actions and Short-Term Projects

*(Summary of Section 18.6 – Action Plan 2013-43 of the approved DTES Plan)*

<b>A - Well-Being</b>
1. Enhance residents' sense of safety, inclusion and belonging, including implementing actions from the City's Task Force on Sex Work and Sexual Exploitation and Missing Women's Inquiry.
2. Improve access to affordable, nutritious, and culturally-appropriate foods.
3. Continue to prioritize that the safety of women, children, seniors, and culturally- diverse groups through well-designed spaces and inclusive programs.
<b>B - Housing</b>
1. Offer grants to non-profits to upgrade SROs while maintaining affordability.
2. Continue working with the Residential Tenancy Branch to improve tenant/landlord relations.
3. Address urgent social housing needs.
4. Explore creative financing using a 'cost-benefit' approach for scattered supportive housing sites.
<b>C - Economy</b>
1. Investigate regulatory changes and building code modifications to accelerate small conversions and renovations of business premises (especially in older buildings that are costly to maintain) to allow business owners who wish to make physical improvements.
2. Work with the four Business Improvement Associations to create a neighbourhood- wide business characteristics survey.
3. Work with VEC and BIAs to attract suitable new enterprises with retail strategies.
4. Use City-owned properties, affordable leases, and revitalization tax supports to provide affordable goods and services to the area.
5. Undertake a study of vending alternatives and the establishment of neighbourhood market-selling facilities.
6. Facilitate social and green enterprise practices and innovative business methods to achieve Social Impact objectives and Greenest City Action Plan objectives.
7. Innovate and support opportunities for market-selling, small business and micro- enterprise opportunities for DTES residents to build the survival economy.
8. Identify, secure and maximize economic/business assets that serve the low-income community (particularly in the CBDA)
9. Increase local employment encouraging inclusive local hiring opportunities.
<b>D - Arts, Culture &amp; Heritage</b>
1. Stabilize key existing physical assets and secure ownership in public domain.
2. Retain/create flexible multi-use neighbourhood spaces such as studios, offices, rehearsal/production and indoor/outdoor space.
3. Support community efforts to recognize Aboriginal First Nations heritage and the Salish Sea Civilization concept.

4. Support community initiatives such as raising the stature of the Japanese Canadian heritage, preservation and rehabilitation of the Chinatown Society buildings, identify, preserve and improve places with social and cultural meaning to the community, such as CRAB Park, Pigeon Park, Oppenheimer Park, Powell Street (Japantown), Chinatown, Strathcona, historic lane ways and alleys.

5. Initiate the work on updating the Vancouver Heritage Register.

6. Create a framework and business plan for a Chinatown Society Building Grants Program.

#### **E - Parks & Open Space**

1. Convert over-paved or under-used areas into mini-parks or plazas where possible.

2. Review existing street trees to fill gaps and replace ailing trees, and prioritize planting new trees in areas with few or no existing street trees.

3. Make existing parks more useable by adding new features.

4. Enhance the public realm to improve walkability, and reinforce the distinct identity of historic areas.

#### **F - Community Place-Making**

1. Encourage the revitalization of laneways through temporary installations and development opportunities.

2. Hastings Street and Kiwassa Urban Design Framework and Public Realm Plan.

3. Undertake improvements to Water Street and Maple Tree Square, including the public realm, pedestrian, cyclist, and traffic safety, and introduce amenities for community programming and celebrations.

#### **G - Well-Managed Growth & Development**

1. Consider amending land use and development policies and by-laws to support plan implementation, including the adoption of a new DTES Rezoning Policy and Social Impact Objectives.