



May 20, 2020

To: Mayor and City Council

CC: Mr. Sadhu Johnston, Ms. Sandra Singh, Ms. MaryClare Zak

## **COVID-19 Recovery and Beyond for the Downtown Eastside Enhanced Community Economic Development Program Implementation**

The City of Vancouver in collaboration with community partners has done an admirable and effective effort to contain and limit the potential negative impacts of COVID-19 on the DTES. But we all know the issues of poverty, addiction, mental health, employment, and homelessness that we were dealing with prior to the pandemic do not go away with social distancing and the potential vaccination options.

Exchange Inner City and Buy Social Canada want to encourage the City of Vancouver to continue working with community partners to enhance existing and established policy and programs as a means to support the next steps in recovery of COVID-19 and to further the social, health and economic development in the DTES.

Beyond COVID-19 recovery, within the existing Healthy City Strategy and the city's DTES plan there are several goals and objectives that will be achieved if the City of Vancouver accelerated the current Community Economic Development policies and programs.

Community Economic Development recommendations:

1. Accelerate the implementation of existing social procurement policy and programs
  - Recognize the Exchange Inner City and Buy Social Canada Social Procurement Roundtable as a platform for furthering social procurement in the inner city
    - Establish annual measurable outcomes
  - Implement and measure City of Vancouver social procurement activities
    - Unbundle larger contracts to create opportunities for social enterprises and small business in the inner city
    - Direct award contracts to social enterprises
    - Utilize trade agreement thresholds to expand small business access
    - Require social value outcomes for all City of Vancouver suppliers and contractors
      - Targeted employment
      - Training

- Supply Chain Social Value Outcomes
  - Community Development
2. Expand and refine the current Community Benefit Agreement policy in the inner city
    - All developments, private and public, should require a community benefit agreement commensurate with size of the project
  3. Continue to fund Buy Social Canada as the City of Vancouver's Community Benefit Agreement Implementation Partner (Third Party Monitor)
  4. Move all non-profit organizations and cultural-purposed City of Vancouver and property endowment fund properties and rentals to Community Impact Real Estate Society, CIRES, to make it affordable to non-profits and allow for the re-investment of any profits back into the DTES community
  5. Provide multi-year funding to Exchange Inner City and Buy Social Canada to support social enterprise development and social procurement implementation
  6. Contribute to a re-payable social value fund to provide loans and patient capital for the inner-city social enterprise sector
  7. Continue to fund the Exchange Inner City managed peer-employment programs as a key element of DTES resident opportunities for economic inclusion and community engagement

The community engagement efforts of Exchange Inner City and the Buy Social Canada supported social enterprise infrastructure exists in the DTES and is poised to take on an even greater role in supporting the health of the community. It is now merely a matter of implementing and expanding existing policy, programs and practice with the community.

We look forward to engaging with staff on furthering these efforts to build a more vibrant and resilient community.

Regards,



Alisha Masongsong  
Executive Director, Exchange Inner City



David LePage  
Managing Partner, Buy Social Canada

## **Related Existing City of Vancouver Policy and documents:**

### **City of Vancouver Healthy City Strategy**

*“Our goal: Adequate income and access to a broad range of healthy employment opportunities”*

### **Social Value Procurement Policy**

The objective of Social Value Procurement is to leverage resources and relationships that:

- Increase economic opportunities
- Diversify the Supply Chain: promote social value business that have a recognized certification and/or are owned/controlled by an equity seeking population (including but not limited to non-profits/coops, women, Indigenous persons, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+, newcomers to Canada)
- Improve economic independence and capacities
- Promote workforce diversity – underemployed, unemployed, under-represented groups
- Advance inclusion, reconciliation, equity and diversity

[vancouver.ca/files/cov/social-value-procurement-faq.pdf](https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/social-value-procurement-faq.pdf)

### **Current Downtown East Side Plan**

- Social enterprises are encouraged
- Local hiring and social purchasing policies are a priority;

[vancouver.ca/files/cov/downtown-eastside-plan.pdf#page=12](https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/downtown-eastside-plan.pdf#page=12)

### **Community Benefit Agreement Policy – October 2018**

[vancouver.ca/people-programs/community-benefit-agreements.aspx](https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/community-benefit-agreements.aspx)

### **DTES Social Enterprise Impact Report – December 2019**

- Survey of 40 social enterprises in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside documented \$26.5m in sales with \$18.4m in wages. These enterprises have created over 2,800 jobs, with 55% of full-time and 90% of part-time workers overcoming barriers to employment.

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