

FIRST FOCUS

VANCOUVER AGREEMENT

BACKGROUND

Street improvements build community pride and public safety

Clean and well-maintained streets are an important part of revitalizing the Downtown Eastside. Clean streets; sidewalks free of litter, debris, and drug paraphernalia; and walls cleaned of graffiti can reinforce the sense that people care about a neighbourhood. This, in turn, contributes to a greater feeling of safety and order on the street.

This is one of the reasons the federal government, through Western Economic Diversification, and the City of Vancouver have funded an expansion of the graffiti removal service in the Downtown Eastside.

The program will build on existing community partnerships and hire local residents to remove unsightly graffiti from private buildings along portions of Hastings Street. Local buildings will look cleaner while residents will gain valuable work experience and earn some income through the program.

This new funding will ensure the continuation of street improvements until March 2002, as well as the expansion of the clean-up to adjacent streets. Graffiti clean-up will now include both sides of Pender Street, Hastings Street and Cordova Street from Seymour to Gore, as well as streets in between.

Part of the funding will work to help ensure local property owners carry on graffiti removal after the first cleanup efforts. Local businesses will be encouraged to maintain their buildings by either removing any new graffiti themselves or offering a donation for on-going services.

The City will also provide additional funding to improve pick-up of used needles and drug paraphernalia. The money will help expand the area that is cleaned, as well as provide more frequent pickup in parks, alleys and streets.

Lastly, to reduce the number of tattered posters attached to street furniture, hoardings and abandoned buildings, the City is setting up a number of community bulletin boards and is adding additional poster cylinders in the Downtown Eastside. These boards and cylinders will be strategically located throughout the neighbourhood and will enable local organizations to post notices and information.