



Update
September 2002

INTRODUCTION

On March 9, 2000, representatives of the federal and provincial governments and the City of Vancouver signed the Vancouver Agreement (VA), a groundbreaking urban development agreement that addresses social, health, and economic challenges in the city.

While the Vancouver Agreement looks at the whole of the city, its first area of focus is the Downtown Eastside (DTES), including Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona, Victory Square, and the Hastings Street corridor. The communities of this historic area face significant challenges including poverty, crime, public health crises, an open drug scene, and economic decline.

Through the VA, the three levels of government have begun to better coordinate initiatives and focus funds, particularly for supporting economic development, crime reduction, and improvements to the public realm, housing, and health care. The Agreement's mandate is also to work with the community and other agencies, such as the Vancouver Police Department and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, to ensure coordinated use of funding and delivery of programs.

While many programs involving basic policing, engineering services, social housing, health care and non-profit societies were in place before the formalization of the VA, many more significant steps have been taken since then.

In September 2000, the VA partners formally announced the First Focus initiative which included funding for four health-related facilities; redesign of the corner of Main and Hastings Street; expanded policing; new housing; and community-based economic development.

The Downtown Eastside Crime Prevention and Community Revitalization Project funds a variety of community-building initiatives including the Chinatown Revitalization Program and Community Directions. The Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA) is the bilateral fund of the federal and provincial governments that promotes economic revitalization.

In addition, the three levels of government have contributed to a variety of other projects in the Downtown Eastside, including various public-realm improvements, economic research, and public forums.

This preliminary report details some of the wide range of projects recently completed or currently under way. Some of these have been formally undertaken by the three levels of government under the VA. Others were initiated by the municipal, provincial or federal government. All have benefited from funding, expertise and other support from one or more of the other governments as a result of the cooperative relationships that have been enhanced by the Vancouver Agreement. A more complete inventory of initiatives is being prepared and will be published later this year.

PROJECTS

I. Economic and Social Development

1. Downtown Eastside Economic Revitalization Strategy

The VA Social and Economic Development Committee is working in consultation with local business and community economic development organizations on several studies. These studies will help develop a strategy to expand business opportunities in the Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona, and Victory Square. Companion projects are described under the Gastown and Chinatown sections of this report.

- **DTES Economic Capacity Study:** The study will be used in to develop an economic revitalization strategy for the area. Its purpose is to identify sections of the economy that can expand in the DTES, especially those that could provide jobs and commercial services for local residents. Preliminary interviews with more than 150 business people have been completed and focus group discussions with sector leaders are under way. The study will be completed this spring.
- **Downtown Eastside Target Area and Empowerment Zone (DESTAN'EZ):** A study is looking at ways in which government and corporate purchases can be focused to attract new businesses and to enhance employment opportunities for DTES residents. Its results will be considered in the development of an economic revitalization strategy for the area.

2. Woodward's

The site that formerly housed the Woodward's department store is critical to the revitalization of the entire DTES area. The building at the corner of Hastings and Abbott Street occupies almost a full city block. Several consultant studies have indicated that until it reopens, it will be difficult to stimulate the economy of the area. Once Woodward's is redeveloped, the storefronts along Hastings to Abbott, and along Abbott from Water Street to Pender are expected to see positive effects. The provincial government, which owns the Woodward's building, is not proceeding at this time with the recent development proposal by BC Housing and the Woodward's Cooperative Housing Society. However, BC Housing is continuing to seek new public-private partnerships that would allow a fiscally sustainable redevelopment of this key DTES site.

3. Employment Strategy

The VA Social and Economic Development Sub-Committee is working with the community and private sector to develop a strategy to help move unemployed residents find jobs. Building on existing programs such as Fast-track to Information Technology (FIT) and Bladerunners, the employment strategy will strive to integrate services and training for jobs identified by private sector partners and the DTES Economic Revitalization Strategy.

- **Skills Development and Apprenticeship (FIT and Bladerunners models):** A program based on the models established by the FIT and Bladerunners (construction) programs will be developed to train and support long-term unemployed people to work in other sectors of the economy.
- **Educational Resource Centre (BEACON model):** Building on the success of UBC's Humanities 101 and Women's Humanities Year, a storefront learning resource centre has been proposed. The centre would provide barrier-free access to advanced education for DTES residents through the BEACON project (Building Education and Culture in Our Neighbourhood).

- **Human Resource Development Canada Investment in the DTES**

The “investment portfolio” of HRDC funds comprises the following tools and interventions:

- community employment resource centre
- pre-employment counselling and case management
- job readiness/employment maintenance
- career exploration
- assisted job search
- Youth Services Canada project

This investment strategy provides opportunities to provide a full range of employment-related services to unemployed individuals.

4. Community Economic Development Organizations

PEACH Fund: The Partners in Economic and Community Help (PEACH) Fund was established in September 2000 to coordinate funding from VA partners for economic and community development initiatives. PEACH is managed in partnership by the Vancouver Economic Development Commission and the Four Corners Support Fund Society and has its headquarters at 125 Main Street. A broadly based community steering committee provides advice on which projects should be funded. It is working to become an independent non-profit society that can play an expanded role with other business and community organizations in the economic revitalization of the area.

After an initial focus on community development, PEACH is now shifting its focus to providing loans and loan guarantees for retaining and attracting small business and social enterprises in the DTES. It also operates the City Lease Subsidy and Tenant Improvement Programs. New enterprises supported by PEACH are described in this report.

- **EMBERS:** The Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society is a community-based economic development society that was initiated by Community Directions. It is carrying out research and public education to help local residents find employment and start new enterprises. It is also undertaking a variety of projects to help foster businesses and social enterprises that are owned and operated by people who live in the DTES. These include:
 - *dtes.ca* , a user-friendly Web site with an inventory of all the agencies in the DTES and the services they offer, including many that help residents re-enter the workforce.
 - *Social Enterprise Centre* , a network of community, public, and private sector mentors to assist people interested in starting social enterprises in the DTES. These enterprises are owned and operated by co-operatives and non-profit societies and intend to provide jobs, training and commercial services for local residents.

5. New Social Enterprises and Small Businesses

- **Call n’Post:** This social enterprise provides voice mail, mail box and computer graphics services to help residents and the homeless who otherwise wouldn’t have access to them to keep in contact with family and potential employers. Call n’ Post is operated by the Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA) and located at 16 West Hastings Street across from Pigeon Park. It received a lease subsidy from PEACH and has been operating since March 2001.
- **City Store:** A consultant is preparing a feasibility study for a City store operated by a non-profit on the City’s behalf. The store would sell unique paraphernalia using the City of Vancouver’s logos and crests. The study will be presented to Council this spring.

- **First Nations Creations Artists Co-op:** Located at 20 Water Street, this co-op for First Nations Artists operates a workshop and gallery space in Gastown and also offers mentoring and training opportunities for First Nations' youth.
- **Furniture Manufacturer:** A high-end custom furniture manufacturing and interior custom renovation plant has received a business development loan from PEACH. The company is currently operating out of a temporary location in Burnaby. It will be moving to the 300-block of Alexander by July 1, 2002. The owner has been working with Tradeworks to identify potential employees with appropriate training.
- **Interurban Gallery:** The gallery, at 9 East Hastings, is slated to contain exhibition space, artist studios, commercial offices, and shops. While the gallery has obtained development and building permits and construction is under way, it has experienced considerable and costly challenges in renovation because it is a heritage building.
- **Potluck Café:** This restaurant, catering service, and bakery opened March 28, 2002 in the storefront of the New Portland Hotel at 20 West Hastings. The Potluck Café provides inexpensive meals and serves as a training site for local residents.
- **reBOOT Vancouver:** Modelled after reBOOT Canada and led by Tradeworks, this social enterprise is being budgeted to train DTES residents to repair, sell and service donated computers for non-profits and charitable groups.
- **Sporting Equipment Manufacturer:** PEACH is supporting a small business development loan for a specialized type of sports equipment. The loan will allow for the production, testing and preliminary marketing of this unique item. If there proves to be a market, the applicant, who lives in the DTES, proposes to manufacture it in the community and to hire and train local residents.
- **Web Site Application Developer:** Two young UBC grads received a PEACH business development loan to develop a variety of user-friendly software for small businesses. Already operating out of a DTES location in 000-block of West Pender, they have offered to provide training and employment opportunities for local residents as they expand.

6. Neighbours First

Neighbours First is being initiated as community-based program that provides assistance to visitors to the Downtown Eastside and others. The program will aim to improve the sense of friendliness, street cleanliness, crime prevention and law enforcement by deploying trained, uniformed volunteers and paid staff (street cleaning) throughout the target area. The program was developed by the Gastown and Chinatown Business Improvement Associations, the Chinatown Community Policing Centres, organizations representing low-income DTES residents, Vancouver Police, EasyPark, ICBC and SecuriGuard. The project is intended to become self-sustaining.

7. Community Access Program (CAP)

The Community Access Program provides free access to computers at 19 sites for people who live and work in the DTES. It was funded to operate from February 2001 to March 2003.

8. Arts Initiatives

- **Artspeak Gallery:** Funding was provided to assist this artist-run centre at 233 Carrall Street in Gastown. The storefront gallery will be renovated to improve the gallery's functional layout, provide a more publicly accessible archive area, and improve the entrance's visibility and security.

- **Firehall Arts Centre:** The Firehall Arts Centre, located at 280 East Cordova Street, has had several recent capital improvements including: an exterior restoration project which won a Vancouver Heritage Award; the addition of a wrought-iron fence along Gore Street to open up the backyard performance area to the community; and exterior lighting enhancements. The Firehall has also received funds to support artistic residencies with Metis actor and playwright Marie Humber Clements and a mentorship/residency program with Fif Fernandes. Fernandes is the artistic director of Chutney Productions, a multicultural theatre group providing opportunities for learning about the many facets of an established production company's operations.
- **Gallery Gachet:** Gallery Gachet has received funding for the art exhibition component of its *Up and Out* program, designed to provide public exposure for emerging artists who are also consumers of mental health services and survivors of abuse. The gallery is located at 88 East Cordova Street.
- **The Interurban Project:** Funding has been provided to renovate and revitalize a vacant storefront at 9 East Hastings to create a community-based gallery, including art workshop space, meeting and rehearsal rooms.
- **Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre:** Funding was provided for the production of *Exit the Dragon* in which Asian-Canadian performers took on culturally and artistically significant roles. The production ran at the Fringe Festival and the Firehall Arts Centre.
- **Vancouver Co-Operative Radio:** The radio station received funding to assist with the costs of moving to a highly visible location in the newly-renovated Sunrise Hotel at 101 East Hastings Street. The station features a wide variety of local arts and cultural programming.

II. Gastown Initiatives

1. Gastown Heritage Management Plan

Consultants have prepared a plan for this City of Vancouver initiative, which is being reviewed by the City and the community and will be reported to Council by summer 2002. The plan recommends a strong heritage conservation approach with administrative and financial incentives to facilitate the renovation of buildings. Companion work is under way to amend the Building By-law and to delegate provincial heritage designation authority to the City.

2. Blood Alley Initiative

A consultant will be working with property owners and residents to develop a strategy to restore this important public space as a focal point for the community. Renovation of several surrounding buildings is expected to help kick start the Gastown Heritage Management Plan. The study will begin by autumn 2002. Several major community-sponsored public events have taken place over the last year attracting thousands of people to the area to celebrate Chinese New Year, see local fashion, and listen to the Bach Choir.

3. The Dugout

The Dugout is a long-standing drop-in centre/coffee house at 59 Powell Street that offers programs for people addicted to alcohol. It is operated by a coalition of local churches. A community conflict-resolution process has proposed several measures to help reduce neighbourhood impacts and improve conditions for Dugout patrons. Renovations to the Dugout will be completed shortly.

4. Gastown Parkade Security Improvements

Renovations to upgrade the Gastown Parkade at 130 Water Street to increase safety and security are under way. Negotiations are also under way for a public/private partnership to further renovate this parkade and redevelop the Cordova parkade. The renovations would accommodate the West Coast Historical Experience, a proposed major tourist attraction that intends to portray the authentic history of the surrounding inner-city neighbourhoods.

5. Gastown Business Assessment

City staff is working with the Gastown Business Improvement Society to collect information and develop a marketing program to retain and attract new businesses in Gastown.

6. Review of Building By-law for Existing Buildings

City staff are developing proposals to make it easier to upgrade and re-occupy existing buildings.

7. Repaving of Water Street

The Water Street roadbed is being rebuilt to address underlying structural problems and replace worn pavers and bricks.

8. Street Lighting

A recent local improvement upgraded the street lighting on Powell Street between Carrall and Columbia Streets. Design work is being carried out to help develop a Gastown lighting plan.

III. Chinatown Revitalization

1. Chinatown Vision Development

Work is well under way by City and NCPC (National Crime Prevention Centre) staff, and the Chinatown Revitalization Committee to develop a long-term vision for the future of Chinatown and implementation strategies. This process will be reported to City Council by the end of spring 2002.

2. Chinatown Millennium Gate

The Chinatown Millennium Gate is already under construction with an expected completion date this spring.

3. Shanghai Alley

A 2,200-year-old bell was installed in summer 2001 in the birthplace of Chinatown. The project also includes beautification of the walkway and nine history-telling panels.

4. Chinatown Memorial Square

This is a public work of art commemorating the role of Chinese Canadians in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and World Wars I and II. The art will be installed in the Keefer Triangle at the intersection of Keefer Street and Columbia Street in summer 2002.

5. Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Courtyard Upgrade

The courtyard between Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden and the Chinese Cultural Centre will be improved to make it more functional for cultural events. Construction is scheduled for completion by summer 2002.

6. Chinatown Lighting Improvement Project

About 90 historical lampposts have been constructed and installed to improve pedestrian lighting in Chinatown. The lights were switched on March 28, 2002, and make the streets brighter, safer and more welcoming.

7. **Silk Road**

This safe, easily identifiable pedestrian link between Chinatown and the Vancouver Public Library Downtown was approved for development by City Council in November 1999. Named for the route across Asia that links Rome with China, the Silk Road's goal is to provide a corridor between Library Square and Chinatown. The first phase of the project -- identifying the route through colourful banners and signs-- has been completed. The Silk Road Task Force is now working on historical story-telling panels to be installed along the route.

8. **Community Events supported through the DTES Community Development Project (NCPC)**

- **Chinatown Sports Tournament:** The Chinatown Revitalization Committee organized a table tennis tournament in August 2001 and a Chinese Chess tournament in February 2002 to encourage more sports activities in Chinatown and to attract youth participation in Chinatown Revitalization process.
- **Chinatown Arts Fair:** The Chinatown Revitalization Committee has supported a Chinatown Arts Fair, spearheaded by the Chinese Cultural Centre, to promote arts and cultural activities in Chinatown. The fair also created links to Rive Gauche Market in Pigeon Park as well as the Chinatown Night Market.
- **Chinatown Festival:** Plans are in place for the Vancouver Chinatown Festival, an event celebrating the area with a street fair, musical competition, food testing and sidewalk market. The festival will involve the whole Chinatown community and will take place August 2 to 4, 2002.

IV. **Other Public Realm Projects**

1. **Victory Square Park Improvements**

A lighting project will help celebrate the history of Victory Square Park, while improving the safety and usability of the park. The first phase of lighting will be installed by spring 2002. Friends of Victory Square is also working with the Park Board and City on other physical design changes and programming activities for the park.

2. **Downtown Eastside Historic Markers**

Seventeen mosaics installed in sidewalks form a walking tour through the Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, and Strathcona. The mosaics accompanied by banners and a guidebook, depict local history, places, and people. The mosaics were designed by local artists and created by area residents, many of whom are addicted to drugs, as part of a life-skills training and a community pride project managed by the Carnegie Centre.

3. **Carnegie Action Project Banners**

A series of banners celebrating the history of the Downtown Eastside were designed as part of a life-skills training and community pride-building project. They have been installed along four blocks of Hastings Streets from Cambie to Main Street.

4. **Former CPR Right-of-Way**

City staff is working with the community to create a Greenway, a pedestrian and bicycle-friendly path, on Canadian Pacific Rail's former route linking International Village to Gastown. Portions adjacent to the Van Horne and Native Housings Project have been completed. A landscaped parking lot south of Hastings Street is under construction. Preliminary negotiations are under way with remaining property owners to secure full public access. Draft guidelines for the design of the Greenway will be presented to Council by summer 2002.

5. **Downtown Transportation Plan and Historic Streetcar Project**

The City is developing a downtown transportation plan in consultation with the public and several DTES, Chinatown, and Gastown community and business groups. Proposals are under consideration to reduce traffic speed along Water and Powell Streets and to widen the sidewalk along Carrall. A streetcar to link the south shore of False Creek to Stanley Park via Chinatown and Gastown is part of a proposed public-private partnership.

V. **Streetscape Improvements**

1. **Graffiti Removal**

City Engineering Services is providing paint, materials, expertise, and training to support Chinatown's volunteer graffiti removal program. United We Can, a locally run non-profit society, has embarked on a graffiti removal program for Hastings Street and Gastown.

2. **Street, Side Walk, and Lane Cleaning**

The DTES continues to receive the highest frequency of street and lane cleaning in the city. Sidewalks and gutters in the core of DTES area are cleaned five times a week during the day; and every single night of the week, the sidewalks, gutters and streets are flushed. About a dozen of the dirtiest lanes in the Chinatown, Gastown and DTES are hand-cleaned and flushed up to seven times a week. United We Can is also under contract with the Gastown Business Improvement Society to do detailed lane clean-up.

3. **Needles**

Three needle disposal containers have been installed outside the Carnegie Centre and in Oppenheimer Park. Regular needle sweeps are performed on streets, lanes, and parks throughout the DTES by a number of agencies including VANDU, DEYAS, and StreetYouth Job Action.

VI. **Community Health and Safety**

1. **Health Connection Programs**

These programs provide front-line health and substance misuse referral services, recreational programs, and life-skills training for drug users. They are monitored by a community-based program advisory committee and a neighbourhood liaison committee.

- **Expanded Primary Care**

Expanded hours of primary health-care service are being provided at various sites in the downtown area to include evenings, weekends, and women-only hours. This initiative works towards broadening the range of services at primary health-care sites throughout Greater Vancouver. A comprehensive range of services coordinates care and prevents duplication of services, allowing health professionals to respond to the changing health needs of the client and community in a timely fashion.

- **The Health Contact Centre** (166 E. Hastings) is operated by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA) and provides basic health care and referrals to other health facilities in the region. It is a first contact for many of the people addicted to drugs, and part of a strategy to reduce the impacts of the illegal drug market near Main and Hastings without displacing it to other neighbourhoods. The centre officially opened on December 21, 2001 and works in conjunction with the Carnegie Outdoor Street Program.

- **The Life Skills Centre** (412 E. Cordova) opening fall 2002, will serve clients looking for access to skills, job training, and connections with the broader community. Work is in progress and it is expected to open in spring 2002.

2. DTES Primary Care Centres

Two health clinics are being relocated and expanded to provide additional treatment services to close gaps in the care system and improve their effectiveness. They are operated by VCHA and monitored by a community-based program advisory committee and a neighbourhood liaison committee.

- **Pender Community Health Clinic** (59 W. Pender) opened on December 21, 2001 to provide health services to people addicted to drugs, as well as primary care for other local residents. Staff and operations were relocated from the Gastown Clinic and other health offices around the area.
- **Downtown Community Health Centre** (569 Powell) opened in January 2002 to provide basic health care, mental health and addiction treatment, counselling, and nutritional support services in a new and larger facility. Services are available for individuals and families from the entire community.

3. Redesign of the Main and Hastings Corner

Construction began mid-March on the physical redesign of the Carnegie Centre entrance and the expansion of the corner's outdoor sitting area. The goal of the reconfiguration will be to reduce illegal drug activities and public crowding at the corner of Main and Hastings. The redesign is expected to be complete by winter 2002.

4. Enforcement

More Vancouver Police patrol officers have been deployed and existing officers re-deployed to increase contact and visibility in the community. Stepped up enforcement efforts target non-addicted drug dealers and violent crime. Increased enforcement has led to more drug arrests and significantly decreased crimes against persons. Other initiatives have focused on reducing the sale of rice alcohol, reducing the hours of operation of businesses, and closing pawnshops, second hand stores, restaurants and corner stores that directly or indirectly support the illegal drug trade. Co-ordinated enforcement efforts with City and provincial staff have also reduced illegal drug-related activity in many pubs and single-room-occupancy hotels. Significant reductions in drug dealing and visible drug use west of Columbia Street have been achieved.

5. Community Dental Clinics

Two new dental clinics have been established in the community.

- **Strathcona School Dental Clinic** (601 Keefer St.) serves children and their families.
- **Sunrise Hotel Community Dental Clinic** (101 E. Hastings St.) serves adults.

6. Drug Treatment Court

The drug treatment court is an alternative to the criminal justice system for people with a recognizable drug addiction who are facing non-violent drug-related offenses. Its primary objective is to increase public safety by reducing drug addiction and the crimes committed to support a drug habit, through a combination of treatment and court monitoring. The court opened in November 2001 at 221 Main Street. The associated treatment facility is located outside the DTES on Bute Street in the central business district.

7. Communicable Disease Prevention

The VCHA provides ongoing immunization campaigns to the "hard-to-reach" population for the prevention of communicable diseases such as influenza, hepatitis A, B and C, tuberculosis, and sexually transmitted diseases. Users have an integral role in prevention and education activities.

8. Medication Management

This project enables the VCHA to support clients in managing a complex medications regimen.

9. Nutrition Services

A slate of nutrition services provides community education and training on: basic nutrition; coping on a low income; preparing food to promote independence; and empowering communities to care for their own nutritional needs. Community kitchens are organized within the single room occupancy hotels and community facilities. One-to-one assessment and clinical intervention is also provided, as well as group counselling and training sessions to meet specific nutritional needs.

10. Ambulatory Detox Services

People who are addicted to drugs require a period of detoxification before they can go on to sustained treatment programs. Traditionally, this was done at residential detox facilities. Ambulatory detox or “daytox” is more cost effective because it allows clients to live at home and visit a facility during the day. These new “daytox” programs are in a variety of facilities across the region that link substance withdrawal to a variety of services including sobering, outreach, and residential treatment.

11. Community Supported Detox

The VCHA is working to expand home/outreach programs for people addicted to drugs that cannot come to “daytox” facilities. This includes visits to people in their homes. It also includes partnerships with emergency shelters to extend options to the homeless throughout the region. Home/outreach programs are a responsive and cost effective way to provide withdrawal services. Like ambulatory detox, this service focuses more on detox as a process and not a place.

12. Dual Diagnosis Recovery Beds

THE VCHA is working to establish dual diagnosis/recovery beds in drug and alcohol facilities outside the DTES for men and women diagnosed with mental health and addiction problems.

13. Cordova Detox Expansion

Detox services in this facility at 119 East Cordova have been expanded to 30 beds and linked to post-withdrawal services and support in the community.

14. Expanded Saferide

This program provides a safe ride home for inebriated individuals and has been expanded to support sobering services.

15. Organizational development of DTES Women's Centre

A new facility has been established with emergency and long-term housing for women in the DTES. Joint organizational development for Bridge Housing Society (BHS) and the DTES Women's Centre that is re-locating to the new BHS facility is being supported.

16. Enhanced Women's Recovery Homes Program

The VCHA is establishing 28 additional post-recovery home beds throughout Vancouver for women with drug and/or alcohol dependence, especially women on methadone.

17. Outreach Work with Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA)

UNYA is a non-profit organization formed in response to the lack of services for aboriginal youth in Greater Vancouver. It is located at 1640 East Hastings. Many of the youth who frequent the drop-in reside in the DTES.

18. Addressing Sexual Exploitation of Aboriginal Youth

Many aboriginal youth who are sexually exploited live and work in the DTES. A study was completed that included a video on this issue. These provide a snapshot of young people involved in the street sex trade and an opportunity to seek their advice where possible, on measures to intervene positively in their lives.

19. Vancouver Native Health Society

- Vancouver AHS Coalition
- Sheway and Evaluating the Sheway Project for Substance Abuse
- Hepatitis C and HIV Co-Infection Education and Outreach

20. Carnegie Community Centre Association Street Program

This program provides outreach information.

21. Eastside Hepatitis Community Organization (ECHO) Support Group Development and Capacity Building Project

22. DERA: Children's Coalition of the Downtown Eastside

23. Portland Hotel Society: Hypes for Healthy Living

24. Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users Capacity Building Project

25. PARIS

WD's funds to Vancouver General Hospital and the University of British Columbia Hospital Foundation contribute to the purchase of new software that is at the cutting edge of integrated patient care. The software, PARIS, is built on an Oracle database and it will allow patients to be tracked so that no matter who sees them information about the services they receive is known. These services can range from health care to counselling and employment training. This software will allow for a more comprehensive approach to monitoring services and thus ensure that gaps and overlaps among services are removed in addressing the needs of people in severe living conditions.

VII. Housing Development

A primary objective of the VA Housing Committee is to continue to provide low-income housing both within and outside the DTES and to encourage the development of market housing.

1. Improving Living Conditions in the SRO (Single Room Occupancy) Hotels

Four projects are under way to improve the conditions in the SROs. These include:

▪ Pest Control Public Education

The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority is developing new educational materials on pest control in the SROs. SRO tenants will assist in developing the materials so they are appropriate for the intended audience. Tenants will also distribute the material throughout the SROs in the downtown core.

▪ Locally Based Pest Control Company

A market feasibility and business plan will be developed to determine if and how a locally based pest control company should be established.

- **SRO Management Course**

A pilot course is under development that deals with both the building-maintenance and tenant-management aspects of operating SROs.

- **Pre-employment Skill Development for SRO tenants**

A pilot program and practicum will be developed to increase the number of peer support workers in the SROs.

2. Continuum of Housing Related to Alcohol and Drug Use Inside and Outside the DTES

- Union Gospel Project (361 Heatley) has 81 units for graduates of the Union Gospel residential rehabilitation operation at 616 East Cordova.
- Claude Douglas Place, Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation (2626 Watson Street) provides low-income singles housing outside the downtown for people who are in recovery.

3. SCPI (Supporting Community Partnership Initiative)

SCPI is a three-year federal government program to address homelessness. Many projects are partnered with other funders, including the City and province. Specific projects are recommended for approval by the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness. This group includes representatives from the three levels of government, as well as community stakeholders. During the first two years, funding has been committed to 48 projects throughout the region. Of this, nine projects have been funded in the City of Vancouver outside the DTES, and six projects have been funded within the DTES. Some examples of the latter include the purchase of existing SRO hotels such as the Pennsylvania Hotel and Princess Place; development of buildings containing drug services and transitional housing (YWCA/Sheway); and ongoing services for the dual diagnosed (Triage). Decisions on third-year funding are in process.

4. Outside the DTES

Completed Projects: January 1998 – March 2002

1998

- Muir Manor (2588 Nanaimo St.) -- 34 units for low-income families
- Coal Harbour Co-op (599 Nicola St.) -- 99 units for low-income families
- City Vista (671 West 8th Ave.) -- 26 units for low-income families
- Friendship Court (1600 East 8th Ave.) -- 19 units for singles
- The Marjorie White Building (1640 Graveley St.) -- 18 units for low-income families
- Roundhouse Co-op (1267 Marinaside Crescent) --137 units for families
- The Bonaventure Apartment (1041 Comox St.) -- 30 units for low-income singles

1999

- Lion's Millennium Place (3655 Clark Dr.) -- 39 units for low-income singles
- St. George's Place (2938 Laurel St.) -- 19 units for families
- Arbutus Co-op (2250 W. 10th Ave.) -- 53 units for families
- Quayside Family House (1010 Pacific Blvd.) -- 93 units for families

2000

- Seymour Place (1221 Seymour St.) --136 units for low-income singles
- Katherine Sanford House (561 East 16th Ave.) --18 units for low income singles
- Vanness Park (3278 Vanness Ave.) -- 30 units for families

2001

- Spirit Way (1293 East 10th Ave.) --14 units for families
- Glynn Manor (520 West 7th Ave.) -- 49 units for low-income singles
- The Crowne (5750 Oak St.) -- 4 units for seniors
- Norah Davis Gardens (2320 Franklin St.) -- 33 units for families
- Katherine Sanford (2111 Triumph St.) -- 15 units for low-income singles
- Yaletown Mews (201 Alvin Narod Mews) -- 60 units for low-income families
- Collingwood Housing Co-operative (3501 Euclid Ave.) -- 79 units for low-income families

Projects In Process as of March 2002

- Mole Hill Community Housing Society – Phase 1 will be located in the West End at the 1100-block of Comox and Pendrell Street. It will house 68 units of non-market housing for low-income families, seniors, and singles, and is expected to be completed by spring 2003.
- Mole Hill Community Housing Society – Phase 2 will be located at Bute/Pendrell and Thurlow Streets. It will provide 100 units of non-market housing for low-income families, seniors, and singles.
- Lookout Emergency Shelter Aid Society (2088 Yukon St.) will house 37 units for low-income singles and homeless people outside the downtown core. It is expected to be completed by autumn 2002.
- Affordable Housing Non-Profit Rental Association (1299 West Hastings St.) will house 113 units for families -- 68 units are for core-need households and 45 family units will be charged low-end market rents.
- The Mennonite Project (1265 Granville St.) has a proposed 63 units, and is targeted at low-income singles living in downtown south SROs.
- City Gate Housing Co-op (188 Milross) will provide 102 units for low-income families.
- Clarendon Court (6450 Clarendon) provides 100 units for seniors eligible for SAFER.
- Lu'Ma Native Housing (1254 E. 8th Ave) has 22 units for First Nations families and singles in core need.
- Dr. Peter AID Foundation (1110 Comox St.) will house 22 units for the homeless or at-risk.
- St. Elizabeth Home (335 E 16th Ave) will provide 10 housing units and 32 shelter beds for women in crisis with or without children.
- Dunsmuir House (535-573 Homer St) will replace the existing Dunsmuir House at Richards and Dunsmuir, which has 166 SRO rooms and 30 men's shelter beds. The new project will have 200 units for low-income urban singles, of which 30 units are funded by BC Housing.

5. Inside the DTES

Completed Projects January 1998 – March 2002

1998

- VanCity Place for Youth (326 West Pender St.) -- 50 units for youth under 25 years of age, converted to SNRF in April 2001.
- Bruce Erikson Place (380 Main St.) -- 35 units for low-income urban singles
- The CBA Manor (32 West Pender St.) -- 44 units for low-income seniors and families
- Cordova House (368 East Cordova St.) -- converted from a 66-unit Special Needs Residential Facility need to be repts to non-market housing for homeless and at-risk singles in DTES

1999

- The Edge (289 Alexander St.) -- 30 live/work units for artists with low and moderate incomes
- St. James Place (340 East Cordova St.) -- 27 units for core-need seniors
- Sunrise Hotel (101 East Hastings St.) -- converted from SRO to provide 52 non-market units for low-income urban singles
- Washington Hotel (177 East Hastings St.) -- converted from SRO to provide 84 non-market units for low-income urban singles

2000

- Regal Place (146 West Hastings St.) -- 39 units for low-income urban singles
- New Portland Hotel (20 West Hastings St.) -- 86 units for hard-to-house core-need singles who have mental, health and/or substance-abuse related problems.
- The Oasis (40 East Hastings St.) -- 84 units for low-income urban singles
- J.C. Leman Building (27 West Pender St.) -- 98 units for low-income urban singles

2001

- Bridge Housing (103 East Cordova St.) -- 48 units for core-need single women living in DTES
- Bridget Moran Place (668 Powell St.) -- 61 units for low-income urban singles
- New World Hotel (396 Powell St.) -- converted from SRO with 110 units for low-income urban singles

2002

- Somerville Place (377 Powell St) -- 31 units for low-income singles
- Salvation Army Crosswalk -- emergency shelter facility that operates the Mat Program at 108 West Hastings; started March 2002

Projects in Process as of March 2002

- Lore Krill Co-op East (239 East Georgia St.) has 97 units for families, seniors, and low-income urban singles.
- Pennsylvania Hotel (412 Carrall St.) provides 41 units for low-income urban singles.
- Lookout Emergency Aid Society (Powell St.): Phase 1 was the purchase of a SRO hotel to retain housing at risk. Phase 2 is for the conversion of the housing to second-stage housing as spaces become available, at which time, support services will be introduced to residents and shelter users.
- Triage Emergency Service has been provided with funding to buy a renovated hotel (Princess Rooms) for second-stage housing for emergency shelter clients.
- Lore Krill Coop West (65 West Cordova St.) has 106 units for families, seniors, and low-income urban singles.
- Katherine Sanford Project (375 Jackson St.) is proposed to house 36 units for seniors.
- YWCA / Sheway (533 E Hastings) provides 12 units of short-term and transitional accommodation for pregnant aboriginal women or single mothers with children

VIII. Community Capacity Building

1. Community Directions (CD)

Community Direction is a community-organizing, capacity-building and mobilization initiative that brings together more than 300 low-income residents and 40 community groups to work together to improve safety, well-being, and quality of life for residents in the DTES. With a storefront office at 384 Main Street, Community Directions has formed working committees on housing, drug policy and community-building economic development; and caucuses and projects involving First Nations, Hispanic and Chinese residents. Some of its achievements include:

- *Latino Working Group* - meets regularly and has developed a ten-session Peer Organizer Training program that 10 residents completed.
- *First Nations Caucus* – has been meeting regularly to develop proposals for a variety of projects needed by First Nations residents of the DTES. It has organized a leadership program for its members to help implement the proposals.
- *Housing Working Group* - has held forums and developed a housing plan for the DTES from the point of view of local low-income residents. It has also worked with residents, community groups and government staff through the VA to address pest control and standards-of-maintenance issues in the SRO hotels.
- *Community Economic Development Working Group* – has involved many residents and community-agency staff in discussions and forums about economic development issues facing the area. This has led to the formation of a non-profit organization called EMBERS – Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society.
- *Alcohol and Drug Working Group* – originated as a result of two “think tanks” involving 75 residents. The group meets regularly and has developed a four-pillar approach drug treatment strategy in consultation with the community.
- *Child and Youth Working Group*- has met regularly to promote parent and youth involvement in the community and to develop programs to address issues facing children and families in the area. They have organized a variety of events including: Warming of the Hearts – A Celebration of Families and Children, a workshop with Clyde Hertzman on strengthening community assets in the DTES/Strathcona; Crab Park Summer Fest; and alcohol and drug prevention workshops for parents in Chinese and English. In addition, they sponsored the Keeping a Lid on Litter initiative involving youth, parents and agencies in a strategy to keep the community cleaner.

2. Chinatown Revitalization Committee (CRC)

The purpose of Chinatown Revitalization Committee is to provide a venue for information-sharing and problem-solving, where all people who live, work or visit Chinatown can identify issues, carry on open discussions and develop work items that will help revitalize Chinatown.

3. Future Search Conference and Follow-up

A conference was held in March 2001 to bring together people who lived and/or worked in the Downtown Eastside and government officials to seek common ground on some of the many difficult issues facing the area. Many ideas were generated to help with the revitalization efforts in the community. Several of the safety, community-development, and public-realm initiatives (e.g. Downtown Eastside Historical Markers, lighting in Gastown and Chinatown, improvements to Victory Square Park) identified at the conference are being implemented.

4. Youth Employment Initiative

The Youth Employment Initiative strengthens employment and leadership skills among at-risk unemployed youth with annual HRDC funding of up to \$200,000. So far, two projects have been approved, one of which involves training local youth to carry out research for the Downtown Eastside Health and Well-being Study. The second project, the MoreSports initiative, trains at-risk youth to work with residents in East Vancouver to help develop community-based children sports leagues. This project has recently begun.