



# City of Vancouver *Planning - By-law Administration Bulletins*

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## NEIGHBOURHOOD FIT CONSIDERATIONS – HELPING DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESSES TO MEET SOCIAL IMPACT OBJECTIVES IN THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE (DTES)

*Authority - Director of Planning  
Effective February 29, 2016*

### 1 Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to introduce the Neighbourhood Fit considerations. Neighbourhood Fit is designed based on the Social Impact Objectives in the Downtown Eastside Plan. The intent is to help new development and businesses to fit better into the neighbourhood.

During the planning process for the Downtown Eastside, residents said they wanted more creative and innovative ways of developing and doing business in the neighbourhood. Developments and businesses can be part of creating a strong, healthy and inclusive neighbourhood.

### 2 The Downtown Eastside Plan

The Downtown Eastside is one of Vancouver's oldest neighbourhoods and is a diverse and dynamic part of the city and region. The neighbourhood is home to a high-proportion of low-income people. Many in the neighbourhood struggle with complex challenges including homelessness, unemployment, poverty, physical disabilities, addictions, and mental health issues. As a result, the area has numerous non-profit organizations, service agencies, low-cost shops and services, and community groups that offer critical support to this vulnerable population.

A Social Impact Assessment was completed to identify and maintain places important to the health and well-being of vulnerable residents, in an effort to achieve livability and affordability for all.

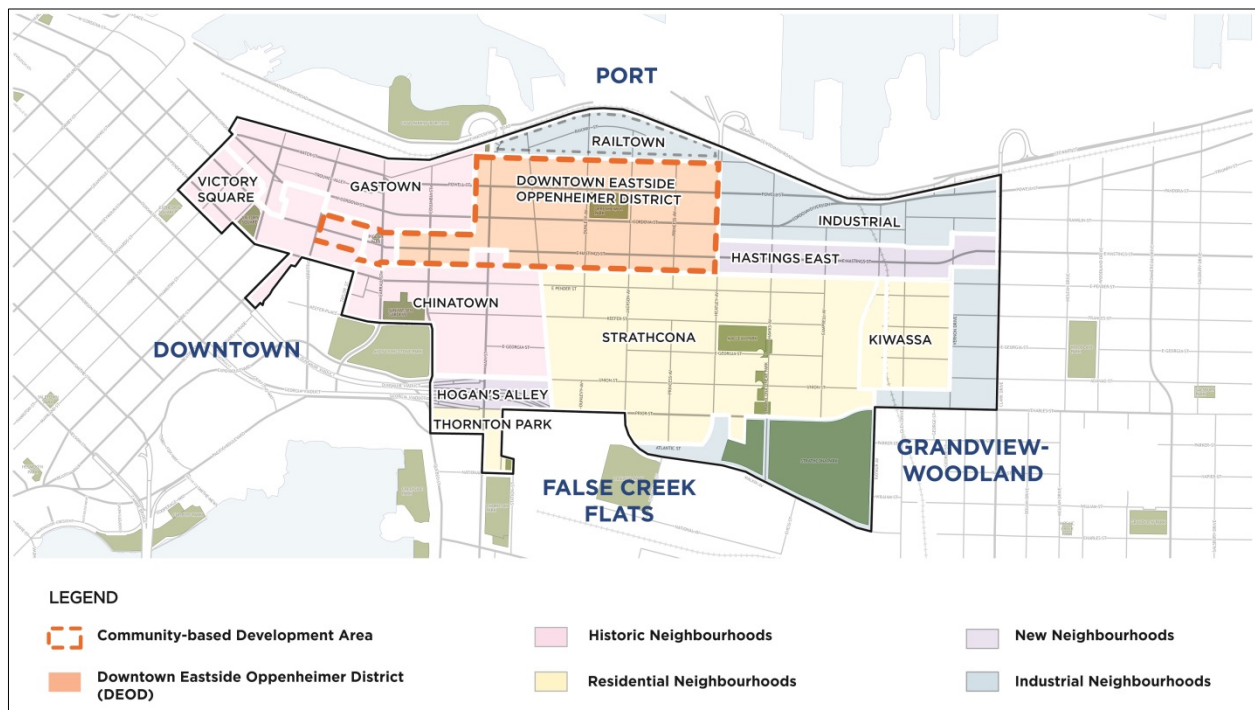
A set of nine Social Impact Objectives were then developed and included in the Council-approved Downtown Eastside Plan (2014). These objectives are meant to guide new developments and help manage change in the DTES.

The Social Impact Objectives seek to:

- Ensure that developments and businesses fit the DTES neighbourhood context, offer needed, locally-serving uses, and do not significantly exclude or negatively impact the low-income community.
- Encourage a wide range of housing options in the neighbourhood, with a particular focus on new and improved social and affordable housing for the homeless and other low- and moderate income singles and families.
- Ensure diverse development that is respectful of heritage assets, surrounding scale, urban pattern, and social and community context.
- Improve the overall quality, accessibility and inclusiveness of the public realm in the DTES, recognizing the uniqueness of each sub-area.
- Maintain the diversity of existing businesses and commercial uses and support affordable commercial spaces for social enterprises, micro enterprises and small businesses providing low-cost goods and services for residents.
- Encourage the use of local goods and services in the construction, operation and maintenance of the proposed development or business.
- Encourage local and inclusive hiring in the construction, operation and maintenance phases of the improvement and the strengthening of social and micro economies.
- Maintain adequate health and social services within the community, as well as community amenity and gathering spaces to serve the needs of the diverse local population.
- Retain, preserve and celebrate local heritage, arts and culture for all.

### 3 Map

The Neighbourhood Fit considerations are being piloted in the “Community-based Development Area”, which is the area of highest concentration of low-income assets.



#### 4 Neighbourhood Fit Evaluation for New Businesses and Developments

The form looks at how the application contributes to the community priorities in the Local Area Plan: in short, how does the proposal fit the neighbourhood?

All new development permits and rezoning applications in the Community Based Development Area are required to complete a short self-evaluation at the time of their application. The form is attached below.

New development permits and rezoning applications are also required to have enhanced community notification. In some cases, a pre-application community open house will be required. The evaluation form will be made available to the community to complete as part of the consultation process.

#### 5 References

- Downtown Eastside Website  
<http://vancouver.ca/dtes>
- Downtown Eastside Plan (2014)  
<http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/downtown-eastside-plan.pdf>
- Social Impact Assessment (2014)  
<http://vancouver.ca/files/cov/social-impact-assessment-2014-feb-26.pdf>
- This administrative bulletin can also be found on the City's website at  
<http://vancouver.ca/home-property-development/zoning-bylaw-administrative-bulletins.aspx>

(Please see the **Neighbourhood Fit: New Businesses and Development Evaluation** form on pages 5 and 6.)

**ABOUT THE PROPOSAL**

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

1. Is the site suitable for proposed development or use?  
 Strongly unsuitable       Unsuitable       Neutral       Suitable       Strongly suitable
  
2. Does the proposed development or use address a need in the low-income community?  
 Definitely does not address a need       Does not address a need       Neutral       Somewhat addresses a need       Definitely addresses a need
  
3. Will the proposal benefit or negatively impact the low-income community?  
 Strongly negatively impact       Negatively impact       Neutral       Benefit       Strongly benefit
  
4. (*Applicants please skip to page 6*) Should the development be approved as is? Should it be changed and if so why? (provide comments below)  
 Should not be approved       Changes need to be made       Approved as is
  
5. (*Applicants please skip to page 6*) Please indicate your overall opinion of the proposal:  
 Really don't like it       Don't like it       Neutral       Like it       Really like it

**COMMENTS**

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## CONTRIBUTION TO DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE PLAN PRIORITIES

### Rating Guide

0	<b>Does not</b> at all contribute to plan priorities
1	<b>Small</b> contribution to priorities
2	<b>Some</b> contribution to plan priorities
3	<b>Significant</b> contribution to plan priorities
4	<b>Exceptional:</b> clearly 'above & beyond' in contributing to plan priorities

We expect that most proposals will fall in this range.

	0	1	2	3	4
Hires local people, including people with barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchases local goods and services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides needed, low-cost goods and services for residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Includes the low-income community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fits the neighbourhood (Heritage, scale, urban pattern, social and community context)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improves the quality, accessibility + inclusiveness of neighbourhood public spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Retains, preserves or celebrates arts and culture for all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides more housing options in the neighbourhood, especially low-income social + affordable housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintains health and social services in the low-income community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides community amenities and indoor gathering spaces	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### COMMENTS

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