

The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association officially supports supervised consumption sites in the downtown core

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2018, VANCOUVER, BC— The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA) announced today that they will officially support the establishment of supervised consumption sites within their 90-block district in the downtown core. The policy was drafted by the Association’s Policy Advisory Council (PAC), and subsequently approved by the Board of Directors. Both groups consist of DVBIA members, including representatives from businesses such as ground-level retail, professional services agencies, and building owners.

This policy position is the first to come from the DVBIA’s Policy Advisory Council, and stems from an initial information meeting with health care providers in the fall of 2017. A subsequent meeting was held with Vancouver Coastal Health in late 2017 to seek clarification on the future direction, and offer their assistance to address the opioid crisis.

Last summer, the PAC had two meetings to identify and rank a number of policy issues based on the following criteria: immediacy and impact for downtown and DVBIA members, and alignment with the DVBIA’s five-year strategic goals. One of the most pressing issues that emerged was mental health and addictions.

“The Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association is proud to officially lend our support to supervised consumption sites in the downtown core.” said DVBIA’s President & CEO Charles Gauthier. “Supervised consumption sites save lives and prevent the spread of diseases among drug users and the general public. Clientele of supervised consumption sites are also more likely to enroll in methadone maintenance or other drug treatment programs.”

“The Downtown Business Improvement Association’s position demonstrates a commitment to the health and wellbeing of our community” said Dr. Reka Gustafson, medical health officer with Vancouver Coastal Health. “We know through both research and experience that supervised injection services are life-saving, and can link clients to other health and support services. During this overdose crisis, no deaths have occurred at supervised injection or overdose prevention sites - a testament to how harm reduction can create safer and healthier communities. We look forward to the continued support from the DVBIA as we strive to integrate supervised injection services as a standard service throughout our health care system.”

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For more information, or to schedule an interview with DVBIA’s President and CEO Charles Gauthier, please contact:

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