



June 12, 2025

Dear Premier Eby,

Re: Granville Street Requires Immediate Support and Structural Change

I write on behalf of the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (Downtown Van) to express the urgent and growing concern of our members regarding conditions on Granville Street.

Business owners are at a breaking point. They have endured years of street disorder, rising costs, and policy decisions that have compounded pressures in the Granville Entertainment District. Many now question the viability of continuing operations in one of Vancouver's most historic corridors, and some face imminent closure.

This situation demands more than containment. Through the Granville Street Plan, the Province has an opportunity to demonstrate leadership, restore public trust, and drive lasting renewal. But first, we must acknowledge that the current trajectory is unsustainable.

The challenges go beyond inflation or changing consumer habits. At the core lies systemic mismanagement of supportive housing, which has eroded safety, infrastructure, and the viability of the area – harming both tenants and neighbours.

Small businesses, including nightclubs and cultural venues, have suffered repeated water damage, public safety incidents, and reputational harm directly tied to BC Housing's operations at 1176 and 1161 Granville Street (Luugat and St. Helen's Hotel). As of June 2020, these buildings were rationalized to the business community as temporary, emergency measures, yet their impacts have been enduring.

Since 2020, the owner of Aura Night Club has reported over 200 flooding incidents caused by infrastructure failures in the Luugat, including four in a single weekend this April. Cabana Lounge has faced similar issues, including human waste and debris thrown from windows, some of which have struck patrons and equipment. These are not typical urban issues – they reflect systemic policy failures, insufficient oversight, and inadequate care for tenants.

BC Housing has spent millions on reactive repairs at these two addresses, yet core problems persist. The individuals housed here clearly require a higher level of support than they are currently receiving, and the costs of inaction are borne by more than just nearby businesses:



- At the Luugat, Priority 1 police calls (life-threatening or urgent) rose from 73 to 130 between 2020 and 2024 – a 78% increase. Priority 2 calls doubled from 171 to 342.
- Fire responses to the Luugat increased from 91 to 243.
- Fire responses to the St. Helen's Hotel rose by an alarming 722.5%, from 40 to 329.
- St. Helen's Hotel, in particular, has lost public trust due to repeated safety violations despite being home to some of Vancouver's most vulnerable people.

This is a structural issue. Operators have had ample opportunity to build trust and maintain order but have failed to do so. A fundamental re-evaluation of how housing and social services are delivered in the area is now essential.

The City of Vancouver has proposed important measures alongside the Granville Street Plan – including integrated services, enhanced public realm investment, and efforts to transition SROs while maintaining housing supply. These must be pursued urgently, but success hinges on full Provincial partnership.

We urge your government to act swiftly. Downtown Van calls on the Province to:

- Provide relief to affected businesses, including rent support or compensation where damages are clearly linked to Provincial housing policy.
- Work collaboratively and transparently with the City and business community to implement the Granville Street Plan.
- Decentralize low-income emergency housing currently concentrated in the central business district.
- Invest in public safety and cleanliness, including coordinated interventions in back lanes and adjacent properties near the Luugat.

Today, nearly one in three storefronts on Granville Street are vacant, with the 900–1100 blocks hardest hit. Granville Street also accounts for 52% of all graffiti removals in the downtown core, with an 8.4% increase over last year.

Between January and May 2025 alone, we recorded 465 welfare checks and 2,001 incidents of open drug use between the 900 and 1200 blocks. Welfare checks by our safety team have risen 109% year-over-year and grown in severity while open drug use has surged 212%. Just two days ago, one of our Downtown Safety Ambassadors was the victim of an unprovoked physical assault on Granville Street, the second such attack on our team in one week.

While not all these issues stem from supportive housing, it is clear that the current model is misaligned with the function of the Entertainment District and contributes significantly to the street's instability.

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Still, businesses on Granville Street continue to show remarkable resolve. We join them in calling for support, partnership, and a serious shift in how we approach one of Vancouver's most iconic – and challenged – high streets, particularly as we prepare to host major international events.

We request a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss actionable next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Talbot".

Jane Talbot
President & CEO
Downtown Van