



CONNECTIONS

Newsletter of the Strathcona Business Improvement Association

Strathcona BIA

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

OPEN WINDOWS PROJECT GAINS MOMENTUM

Over the past couple months, the Strathcona BIA has been busy with a start up demonstration project targeted along the 300-400 blocks of Powell Street, funded in part by the Vancouver Agreement. The project has opened the discussion of possible options for streetscape improvements as well as the exploration of alternative ways to provide building security and storefront enhancements. Frank Ducote Urban Design and the City of Vancouver has assisted the Strathcona

BIA in leading an art, design, and community consultation process. This process was used to generate ideas to upgrade and improve the streetscape and eventually lead to an "Open Windows" environment that will be more welcoming and positive to retail consumers and new merchants. This process or design Charette has been in collaboration with the City of Vancouver, local residents, artists, architects, businesses, social service providers, and many other cultural community members.

Two Open Houses, at 350 Powell Street, displayed ideas from the design charrette along with a variety of local artist submissions.

Currently the Strathcona BIA is working on leveraging more funding to execute the design and implementation phase of the Powell Street Open Windows Project. Improving the public realm and infrastructure can help increase the sense of community safety, encourage pedestrian activity and support for local products and services.

BUSINESS ALLIANCE FOR LOCAL LIVING ECONOMIES (BALLE)

Balle is launching an exciting campaign to recognize locally owned business and innovative entrepreneurs who live and work in Vancouver. The Strathcona BIA is working with BALLE to encourage Vancouverites to shop locally first this holiday season by extending an invitation to a maximum of five Strathcona BIA members to participate in this campaign. The 'Local First Launch' will be held at the Vancouver Art Gallery. See details in our Calendar.

VANCOUVER FAIR TAX COALITION

In the past few months, the Strathcona BIA, with many local business improvement associations, small business owners and managers, industrial and office property owners, developers, and business associations, became a member of the Vancouver Fair Tax Coalition. The coalition is non-partisan and was formed to highlight the high municipal property taxes paid by commercial properties in Vancouver. As a result, the Coalition brought much attention to the inequitable allocation of the tax burden between residential and commercial properties to City Council & mayoralty candidates. The Coalition will continue to lobby the new City Council and Mayor to ensure their commitment to developing

(see Fair Tax, page 2)



Group discussion at the Open Windows Charrette on Oct 6th, 2005. Clockwise from left: Jane Doe, Jane Doe, Jane Doe and John Doe (put in their affiliations if space allows).

PROGRESS REPORT



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No. 4

	2003	2004	2005
Street Cleaning Hours	218	337	1071 ...so far
Graffiti Tags Removed	2595	2045	1031 ...so far
Security Hours	4552	5316	5240 ...so far

notebook

Strathcona BIA
Christmas Social
December 13
See Calendar for details

did you know?

BUSINESS BUILDERS For Retailers and Restaurants

Strathcona residents, employees, commuters and other businesses

have said that they want to shop locally. Check out these recommendations to attract more of their business and increase retail revenue:

1. Be a part of the Community – Merchants gain from being a visible part of their community. Tying in special offerings with Strathcona events, like the Eastside Culture Crawl or the Powell Street Festival attract event-goers. An event can be celebrated by tying storefronts to the event, displaying event posters and making event brochures available.
2. Good Service – Customer service must be welcoming and professional every time. Multiple payment methods, such as debit and credit cards, attract a wider variety of shoppers. Fast service with good carry bags is necessary to reach the employee market.
3. Coupons & Discounts – Residents and employees are attracted by coupons and discounts. Many may be enticed to try a new shop or product because of a special offer. Retailers could distribute coupons to area employees and residents through mail drops, supported by strong signage for the commuter market.
4. Group Advantages – Shoppers like to be able to save time by purchasing several different items on the same shopping trip. Several neighbouring retailers coordinating their efforts to attract more business create more noticeable impact than individual efforts. Multiple business sales or special offers will attract more customers; a row of new display windows is more eye-catching than just a single window, as are new signs, flowers, better lighting, and other marketing efforts.



PROPERTY OWNERS' CORNER

The Strathcona BIA has lobbied the City of Vancouver for \$300,000 worth of sidewalk reconstruction and repair to various commercial areas in Strathcona. Sidewalk reconstruction has begun along the 100 block of Gore Avenue, and 200 block of Princess Avenue, and will continue throughout the next two years. The next schedule of work will include the 800 block of Powell Street,

Fair Tax *(continued)*

a strategy to permanently bring taxes into line with regional and national averages will be realized.

VANCOUVER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION PROJECT

The Strathcona BIA has partnered with the Vancouver Economic Development Commission to develop a market and commercial area profile for Strathcona.

The "market area" profile will outline demographic and spending characteristics and the "commercial area" profile will outline the business mix, property information and employee base of Strathcona.

These profiles will be complete by early January 2006 and be available on our website at www.strathconabia.com.

There will be a session for interested members to discuss how these profiles can be used. .

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

BALLE

'Local First Launch'

December 3, 2005

11am-5pm

Vancouver Art Gallery

See www.ballebc.com

Christmas Social

December 13

5:30 p.m.

Cook Studio Café

374 Powell Street

Winter Solstice

Lantern Festival

December 21

6-10 p.m.

See www.secretlantern.org

for more details



RISING STARS

Congratulations to Dream Designs for winning the "Best Product Award" in the Home Apparel category at the New York Home Textile Show for their herbal dyed organic cotton sleepwear. They are known for their expertise in organic textile and are a source of wonderful 100% natural and 100% organic home furnishings and apparel.

Dream Designs is a premier sleep, spa, meditate and décor company that has been located in Strathcona for over 20 years. "A community feel with a positive and creative environment where people strive to shop locally is the best part of working in Strathcona", says Linda Tang, President of Dream Designs.

To find out more about this Strathcona Business Success, be sure to visit www.dreamdesigns.ca