



**Downtown Eastside Kitchen Tables Project**  
**'Progress Report & Next Steps'**  
**June 2011**

**Phase 3 - Action & Implementation**

Following 6 months of Research from October 2009 to March 2010 and an additional 1 year of thorough and collaborative planning between April 2010 and March 2011, the DTES Kitchen Tables Project has arrived at Phase 3 - *Action & Implementation*. Our planning approach purposely considered short term, mid term and long term actions and activities, and developed specific plans for our short term objectives. We have already started to implement some activities in Solution No. 1 with the creation of Nutritional & Food Quality Standards and the hiring of a DTES Kitchen Tables Outreach Team. Listed below are all of the short term goals we will implement.

**No. 1 Creating Nutritional & Food Quality Standards**

- Creation of Nutritional & Food Quality Standards that can be adopted community wide by both Residents and Organizations.
- Nutritional & Food Quality Standards are available in hardcopy to DTES Residents and Food Provider Organizations.
- Hiring of a DTES Kitchen Tables Outreach Team to animate the Nutritional & Food Quality Standards through Street Theatre Performances and Food Jeopardy across the DTES to engage both Residents and Organizations in nutritional awareness and the Right to Food philosophy.
- Development of a DTES Kitchen Tables website that will serve as a communication and coordination hub for all DTES food related information.

**No. 2 Menu Development & Recipes**

- Creation of nutritious and cost effective recipes for use by both individuals and organizations suitably portioned in S, M, L, XL sized batches.
- Recipes will be distributed in hard copy and also available on the website in a DTES Kitchen Tables Recipe Bank.
- The DTES Kitchen Tables Recipe Bank will grow as the variety and number of recipes increase.

**No. 3 Food Procurement**

- Creation of a DTES Kitchen Tables Collective Procurement Mechanism that will:
  - Leverage collective purchasing power of existing DTES Food Providers that includes and benefits both Large and Small Food Provider Organizations.

- Increase access to purchase low cost, quality fresh fruits, vegetables and proteins especially for small food provider organizations eg; Grade 2 fruit and vegetables.
- Open up new, untapped purchasing channels to BC and Canadian farmers and growers
- Creation of a DTES Farmers Market
  - The DTES Farmers Market will be located in a commercial property on Hastings eg; The Luxe and serve as the wholesale staging area for incoming wholesale produce/protein for the DTES Kitchen Tables Procurement Collective while also providing a much needed retail market for DTES residents and organizations to purchase quality, low cost produce/protein.
- Food Donation Management Service
  - Creation and management of a Food Donation Database for DTES Food Provider Organizations that lists their food needs on a regular basis.
  - The above Database is matched with surplus, quality, food donations that arrive randomly to DTES Food Provider organizations that can be redistributed to other DTES Food Providers.
  - Contents and gaps within the Food Donation Database determine which categories of food donations the Project is required to solicit on behalf of all DTES Kitchen Tables collaborating organizations.

#### **No. 4 Food Preparation & Processing**

- A pilot project that will prepare low-sodium, nutrient rich, no preservative chicken and vegetable stocks for sale to DTES Food Providers in place of high sodium powder soup stocks. The pilot will: Secure shared use of existing kitchen space from a sister organization/entrepreneur, equipment, storage space, staff and supervisory management and leverage the Collective Food Procurement Mechanism (Solution No. 3) and Professional Food Industry Expertise (Solution No. 6) to ensure ingredients and cost effectiveness. This pilot will provide market and operational research to determine viability and sustainability of this product leading to the development of other products that can be processed and prepped in the DTES for purchase by Food Provider Organizations.
- DTES Kitchen Tables will develop a Signature Product for sale to Food Provider Organizations and the general public as a revenue generator for the DTES Kitchen Tables Project eg; Healthy Snacks.
- Design a prep and processing system for surplus produce/proteins either donated or available at a very low cost for purchase. The goal is to prep and process surplus quality produce/proteins and store for use at a later date.

#### **No. 5 Food Distribution**

- Manage the mapping of food and meals across the DTES by updating the venues, hours and numbers of meals available each day on a regular basis. The DTES Kitchen Tables

Website will serve as an online hub for this information. Information will also be posted in key locations on the ground and across the DTES for the majority of DTES residents who lack internet access.

- Coordinate with DTES Food Providers the planning, scheduling and redistribution of holiday/special event meals in the DTES.
- Invent social, people friendly mechanisms for eradicating food line-ups, including but not exclusive to the use of the DTES Kitchen Tables Outreach Team
- Pilot a DTES Kitchen Tables Mobile Food Vendor Project which includes hiring DTES community staff to sell individual portion sized, healthy food products on the street across the neighbourhood. Healthy items that are already prepared by kitchens and food establishments in the DTES eg; Potluck Café & Catering, Save On Meats and several others would be sold at affordable price points by these Vendors.

#### **No. 6 Professional Food Industry Expertise**

- Secure and manage pro bono Food Service Professionals to work and consult with DTES Food Providers to improve the efficiency of their kitchen operations.
- Refine the Food Service Professional model, document its efficacy/cost effectiveness and establish a pricing structure which would meet the performance needs and financial realities of both organizations and the Professionals in order to ensure this Solution's long term sustainability

#### **No. 7 Greening DTES Kitchens**

- Support DTES Food Providers with the implementation of composting and recycling services under the guidance of the DTES Kitchen Tables Project with the assistance of LOCO BC, Recycling Alternative and the DTES Kitchen Tables Outreach Team.
- Negotiate with composting/recycling service provider Recycling Alternative to secure financially viable composting/recycling services for DTES Food Providers by using the power of our collective buying power and geographic routing hubs.

## **Accomplishments to Date**

### **Phase I – Community Led Food Action Plan Report Priority Setting & Research October 2009 to March 2010 COMPLETED**

The DTES Kitchen Tables Project, cofounded in October 2009 by the DTES Neighbourhood House and Potluck Café Society is a community based Food Action Plan, whose overarching goal is to put healthy and tasty food on Downtown Eastside kitchen tables, especially for the most nutritionally vulnerable.

The DTES Kitchen Tables Project takes a multiple stakeholder, Community Economic Development and systems approach to reforming a disconnected and unsustainable charitable food system. The Project is reforming the quality, nutritional impact, abundance and delivery of food in the DTES in consultation with residents, food provider organizations, non food community organizations, healthcare providers, policy makers, farmers, growers, suppliers, food and beverage industry professionals and researchers. At its core is the Right to Food philosophy.

The DTES Kitchen Tables Project is based on a Community Economic Development approach and as such, creates employment opportunities for low-income DTES residents who face barriers to traditional employment. Applying the proven expertise of Potluck Café's decade old system of supported employment, the Project aspires to replace the unsustainable charity model with job creation which can meaningfully contribute to diminishing the systemic material poverty of DTES residents.

The estimate of what constitutes a 2011 living wage in Vancouver is \$18.80 per hour for a family of 4. The penultimate goal of the DTES Kitchen Tables Project is that our nutritionally vulnerable neighbours earn a living wage (including those dependent on Social Assistance) and be adequately housed so as to be able to make their own purchased food choices and prepare their repasts in their private abodes, at their own kitchen tables.

In October 2009 the DTES Kitchen Tables Project created 8 surveys, the questions of each designed to elicit the relevant data of the stakeholder groups named above. We then distributed the surveys electronically to all stakeholders with the exception of DTES residents. In order to gather the feedback of low-income DTES residents, the Project employed 8 DTES community members to administer these surveys to 350 residents. All stakeholder groups were subsequently invited to a series of lunches during which we proposed **7 Food Solutions** to accomplish the Project's goal using a comprehensive, community wide, collaborative approach.

The 7 Food Solutions of the DTES Kitchen Tables Project are:

1. Creating Nutritional & Food Quality Standards
2. Menu Development & Recipes
3. Food Procurement
4. Food Preparation & Processing
5. Food Distribution
6. Professional Food Industry Expertise
7. Greening DTES Kitchens

In March 2010 we distributed the Project's Phase I Report entitled DTES Kitchen Tables: A Community Led Food Action Plan. The Report is comprised of a narrative summary of current DTES food services, Gap Analysis, Demographic Review, existing research and the Project's survey results. The Report can be accessed at [www.dteskitchentables.org](http://www.dteskitchentables.org)

The DTES Kitchen Tables Project is intended to be transferable – to other Vancouver communities and where so desired, to those across Canada and beyond. We are pleased by the interest of other communities in using the DTES Kitchen Tables Project ideas and its collaborative, multiple stakeholder approach and processes in their own communities.

**Phase 2 – Planning**  
**April 2010 to March 2011 COMPLETED**

During these 12 months we developed the Business Plans which are critical to the realistic implementation of the 7 Food Solutions' activities. The content of the Business Plans was determined in consultation with representatives of the Project's 8 stakeholder groups who generously participated in Focus Groups and one on one consultations defined by the 7 Food Solutions.

The DTES Kitchen Tables Project recruited community staff in January 2011. Currently, 4 low income DTES residents are now employed 10 hours/month as the DTES Kitchen Tables Nutritional Outreach Team – whimsical, sidewalk based pied pipers of food reform and nutritional education. With the support of an Artistic Director the Outreach Team created its first nutritional theatre skit as well as Food Jeopardy games, both inspired by the 7 Food Solutions and performed at various venues across the neighbourhood beginning at HomeGround 2011.

In May, we unveiled 7 Mobile Food Murals, which pictorially represent the 7 Food Solutions of the DTES Kitchen Tables Project. The mobile food murals were created by scores of DTES residents during HomeGround 2011 and at a number of DTES Neighbourhood House workshops. The murals are currently adorning the exterior fence of SOLEfood Urban Farm and will move to other DTES locations.

**DTES Kitchen Tables Project Funders & Investors to Date**

<b>Phase 1</b>	Public Health Agency of Canada	\$35,000
	DTES Neighbourhood House & Potluck Café Society	(In Kind)
<b>Phase 2</b>	City of Vancouver Greenest City Neighbourhood Grant	\$17,500
	Vancity Community Foundation	\$25,000
	The Cooperators	\$20,000
	DTES Neighbourhood House & Potluck Café Society	(In Kind)
<b>Phase 3</b>	City of Vancouver DTES Planning Capital	\$60,000
	Vancouver Foundation	\$35,000
	Face the World Foundation	\$10,000
	Vancouver Coastal Health Healthy Living Program	\$5,000
	DTES Neighbourhood House & Potluck Café Society	(In Kind)