

**ATTACHMENT TWO: HOMELESSNESS IN THE CAPITAL REGION
IN CAMERA STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING & PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 2007**

CITY OF VANCOUVER – HOUSING CENTRE

The Housing Centre was established in 1992. It is responsible for the City's housing programs, policy and research. The City's housing focus has been on the provision of social and rental housing.¹

Support for Social Housing:

1. Purchase of Sites: In 1981, Council made the purchase of privately-owned land for social housing a priority. Generally, the purchased land is leased to non-profit societies and cooperatives for 60 years at 75% of market value. In recent years, the City has provided land leases at no cost for some projects.

2. Lease of City-owned Land: There were over 21,000 occupied units of social housing in the City at the end of 2005. The City owns, operates, or has leased land for over 8,300 units of social housing. Over one-third of all social housing in the City is on City-owned land. Projects primarily serve seniors and families with children. Other projects serve the disabled, low-income singles, aboriginals and youth. They are operated by non-profit housing societies and cooperatives using funds from senior governments.

3. 20% Social Housing Requirement: Beginning in 1988, the City has required that major rezoning of lands to multiunit residential use include 20% social housing. This policy encourages the creation of balanced communities and provides opportunities for low and moderate income households to live in conveniently located and comprehensively planned neighbourhoods. This policy has created, to date, a capacity of 2,500 social housing units. 1,100 units have been built or are under construction.

4. Affordable Housing Fund: In 1981, Council established the Affordable Housing Fund to provide grants for social housing projects developed on City-owned land. By the end of 2003, Council had approved over \$40 million in subsidies from the Fund.

5. Social Housing for Families with Children: In Vancouver, low-income families with children have difficulty in finding suitable accommodation at a rent they can afford. To improve the availability of such housing, the City requires that at least half the social housing units in major projects be designated for families with children.

6. Condominium Conversion Reviews: Rental housing can be lost through conversion to condominiums. The City requires that conversions of four units or more be evaluated in the context of housing requirements in the area.

7. Research Reports: The Housing Centre prepares reports to Council on housing and demographic change, and maintains an inventory of SROs and non-market housing in the City.

8. Operating a Social Housing Portfolio: As part of the 21,000 units, the City, through its Non-Market Operations Division, operates 750 units of social housing. Many are for low-income singles in the Downtown.

9. Tenant Assistance Program: The Housing Centre operates a comprehensive Tenant Assistance Program (TAP). The Program provides direct tenant relocation advice and assistance to people with disabilities and others who have been displaced by redevelopment. Legal information on tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities is also offered.

¹ The GVRD has two full-time professionals working on housing policy and four and a half full-time staff working on the Regional Homeless Steering Committee (including 1 FTE from the United Way). The City of Vancouver has a Housing Resource Centre with 12 staff; six are planners and two to three are active on housing policy, research and planning.