

MOTION

1. Actions to Address Homelessness (VanRIMS 11-2200-21)

At the Regular Council meeting on October 17, 2006, the following motion was submitted by Councillor Capri. Councillor Cadman called Notice under Section 5.4(c) of the Procedure By-law. The motion will be considered at the Regular Council meeting immediately following the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets meeting of October 19, 2006.

MOVER: Councillor Kim Capri
SECONDED by Councillor Suzanne Anton

WHEREAS Mayor Sam Sullivan will officially declare Oct 16 - 22 as Homeless Awareness Week;

WHEREAS the number of homeless in the city has doubled to more than 1,000 since 2001 and it is projected the number of homeless in Vancouver could triple by 2010;

WHEREAS it is estimated that the average new social housing unit costs \$200,000;

WHEREAS Single Room Occupancy hotels and rooming houses provide the most affordable housing in the city, need to be kept open until they can be replaced, but are old, only marginally viable and therefore at risk of closure;

WHEREAS Council approved the Homeless Action Plan in June 2005 that identified three ways to home (housing, income and services) with supportive housing, improved access to welfare, and assertive case management as the plan's highest priorities;

WHEREAS the Province of BC recently announced Housing Matters BC setting out the Province's housing strategies, which include funding for supportive housing and which identifies vulnerable populations including those at risk of homelessness as the Province's top priority;

AND WHEREAS the Province through the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions has challenged municipalities to review their regulations and approval processes and ensure that their regulatory frameworks support the development of affordable and supportive housing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- A. Staff review the Vancouver Charter to identify possible amendments that would support the development of affordable and supportive housing in Vancouver including consideration of property tax relief, transferable density, and bonus zoning;

- B. As a direct means of accommodating the full range of housing needs of the homeless and at-risk; staff work with BC housing and provide support for the immediate replacement of existing single room occupancy units with new, well-designed units of greater floor space per occupant; these units must include modern, properly staffed common areas that permit tenants to interact in a safe and healthy environment;
- C. Staff, in co-operation with BC Housing, undertake a "fast-track" process for the design and predevelopment for 3 of the City's downtown sites designated for SRO replacement housing, including the support services required and capital and operating budgets, in anticipation of future senior government funding for housing for vulnerable and at-risk populations;
- D. Staff, in co-operation with BC Housing, review the plans for cold/wet and extreme weather shelter for the 06/07 winter to ensure that shelter space is available to accommodate the homeless in need of and seeking shelter, and report back to Council by the end of November if there is a need to expand the winter shelter capacity in the city; and
- E. THAT Council request that the Province provide emergency funding for the Single Room Accommodation (SRA) designated buildings in the City to ensure they continue to be viable and properly maintained and managed, and that the City administer the funds in the context of the enforcement of the City's by-laws including entering into agreements with SRA owners to ensure they manage and maintain their buildings in accordance with City by-laws and provincial legislation.

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