



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: September 8, 2011  
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: September 22, 2011

TO: Standing Committee on Planning and Environment

FROM: General Manager, Community Services Group

SUBJECT: Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Protecting Vulnerable Adults & Neighbourhoods Affected by Sex Work: A Comprehensive Approach and Action Plan

**RECOMMENDATION**

- A. THAT Council endorse the framework and actions contained in this report providing a comprehensive approach to addressing sexual exploitation and sex work through enhanced prevention, opportunities for exiting, and improved health and safety for all Vancouver citizens and neighbourhoods.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to review license and enforcement policy and report back to Council with recommendations that will enhance prevention, health and safety, mitigate negative neighbourhood impacts, and support responsible business practices.

**GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

While many of the issues identified in this report fall under senior government jurisdiction, the City has a responsibility to protect the health and safety of citizens and to respond to violence and other harms being experienced across Vancouver primarily by women and vulnerable populations, including urban Aboriginal communities. The report identifies the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach that includes the following key elements: enhanced prevention and awareness, access to health and safety services, investment in social services and supports, including adequate resources to assist individuals to exit sex work, and strengthened regulatory and enforcement approaches that can better address complex challenges and meet the needs of individuals at risk and neighbourhoods across Vancouver. While immediate, locally-based actions can be realised through the City's leadership, the report also identifies actions and resource needs most appropriate for senior governments' consideration.

### ***CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS***

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the forgoing.

### ***COUNCIL POLICY***

Supporting safe and inclusive communities is a key Council priority. On July 29, 2009, Council passed a motion directing staff to report back on a strategy for the City to address the negative impacts of the survival street sex trade in Vancouver neighbourhoods. In addition, on March 10, 2011, Council proclaimed "Stop the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth Week" in Vancouver.

Previous Council decisions include the following:

In 1998, Council passed a motion asking staff to report back on initiatives to deal with community problems caused by the sex trade as a result of resident complaints in the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood. In 1999, Council approved traffic calming measures to address neighbourhood complaints about prostitution activities in Grandview-Woodlands.

In 2001, Council adopted the Framework for Action: A Four Pillars Approach to Drug Problems in Vancouver; and in 2005, Council approved the Homeless Action Plan. Both policies identified the need for increased senior government investment in services for sexually exploited youth and survival street sex workers.

In March 2007, Council amended the definitions of "Health Enhancement Centre" and "Health Care Office" to distinguish between services provided under *the Provincial Health Professions Act* and those where professional accreditation is not required.

### ***SUMMARY AND PURPOSE***

This report provides Council with a comprehensive framework and action plan to address sexual exploitation and negative effects of sex work that has been shaped by input from a diverse range of stakeholders and research sources. Further, the report asks Council to direct staff to report back on options to strengthen the alignment of the City's regulatory and enforcement objectives that can best protect vulnerable individuals involved in sex work and support the health and safety of all residents. Where leadership from either provincial ministries or federal departments is most appropriate, the report identifies suggested actions for the consideration of senior governments.

The framework includes suggestions for enhancing prevention and awareness, supporting health and safety, investing in services and supports, including opportunities to exit sex work, and improving alignment with the City's regulatory objectives. Success is highly dependant upon the cooperation of all partners, including all levels of government, community and research stakeholders from across Vancouver and across the Metro region.

This framework and related actions build on other City priorities, such as the Four Pillars Drug Strategy, now under the Urban Health initiative, and the Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021. Further, the 2011 Social Grant Review (RTS # 9321, October 8, 2011) has identified, as a priority for future funding, investment in neighbourhood safety and violence prevention initiatives identified in the action plan. The City can potentially leverage additional resources through strategic partnerships with senior government and other funding bodies to help address service gaps.

## BACKGROUND

The City of Vancouver’s core mission is to create a great city of communities which cares about its people. However, Vancouver, along with other urban centres, faces a range of urban health challenges, including high rates of child poverty, low income residents<sup>1</sup>, homelessness and concerns with housing affordability. In addition, legal and social systems intended to prevent or address social problems, including sexual exploitation and violence against women, are often over stressed, under funded, or may not be available. The murdered and missing women, and the devastating impacts on families and communities across the province and beyond, exacerbates the need to respond to key issues in a more coordinated and systematic manner.

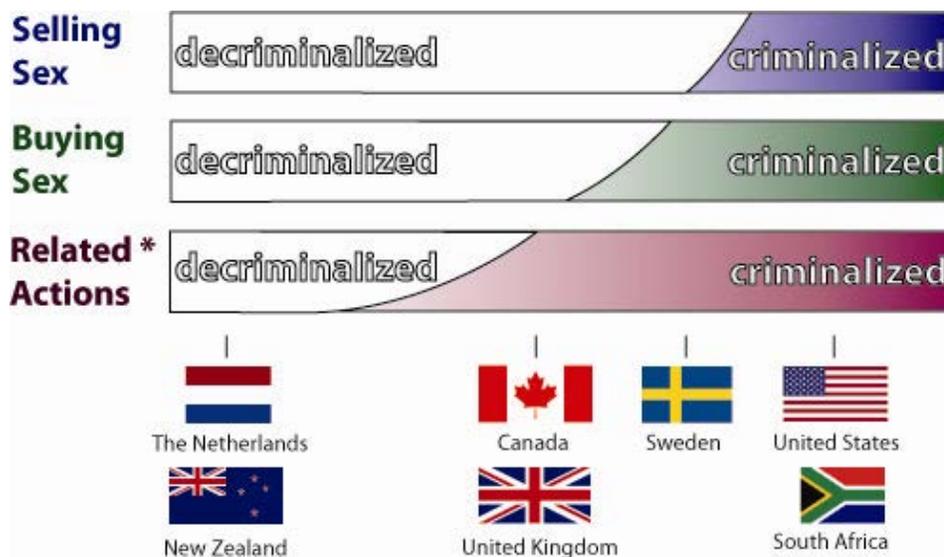
The background provided below summarizes key elements of the complexities behind the issues of sexual exploitation and sex work from international, national and local perspectives, and includes a glossary of terms, information on international and local legal contexts, Canadian government roles and responsibilities, and the impacts of sexual exploitation and sex work on individuals and Vancouver neighbourhoods.

### I. Glossary of Terms:

A glossary of terms used in this report is explained in Appendix A.

### II. International Legal Frameworks and Roles of Government in Canada

#### i. Figure I: International Legal Context



\*communication, procuring, brothels

The legal status of adult sex work varies internationally (see Chart I above). On one end of the spectrum, sex work is formally lawful and decriminalized in the Netherlands and New

<sup>1</sup> Vancouver has the highest poverty rate among major Canadian cities, and BC has the highest child poverty rate of any province. Source: Conference Board of Canada, July 2011

Zealand, including the selling and buying of sex and related activities such as the operation of brothels and other sex service businesses. At the other end of the spectrum, South Africa prohibits the selling and buying of sex and related actions, as does the US (outside the state of Nevada, where sex work is legal). Canada's legal response is most similar to Britain's, in that it criminalizes activities surrounding prostitution – such as running a bawdy house, living off the avails of prostitution, and communicating for the purposes of prostitution – but decriminalizes the act of sex for money. Sweden adopted the 'Nordic' version of prohibition in 1999; it criminalizes the purchasing of sex (by johns or pimps) which is seen as violence against women, and decriminalizes prostitution itself. Proponents of the Nordic model view prostitution as violence against all women.<sup>2</sup>

In Canada and several other countries, obtaining or attempting to obtain sexual services from children is strictly prohibited and criminalized. In Canada, children are defined under the Criminal Code as individuals under the age of 18.

## ii. Canadian Governmental Responsibilities and Roles:

In addition to Criminal Code responsibilities, the federal government is a signatory to international conventions concerning discrimination against women, human trafficking, and the sexual exploitation of children and youth.<sup>3</sup> Provincial government jurisdictions include education, health, social services, and safety. The mandate of municipalities rests primarily in land use planning and regulations, including building and license by-laws promoting neighbourhood compatibility of land uses, citizen health and safety, and responsible business operations. The City has no authority in relation to criminal law. Vancouver and other municipalities may play other discretionary roles, such as social planning, research, and through social service and infrastructure grants. Policing in Vancouver is delegated by the province and overseen by the Vancouver Police Board.

## III. Vancouver Context

Across Canadian cities, adult sex work takes place on the street, through escort and out-calls services, and in massage parlours, private apartments, strip clubs, hotels and restaurants, and through online communication. The sexual exploitation of children and youth is often less visible, but may take place in venues such as shopping malls, schools, public transit areas, as well as through on line communication. It is also associated with youth gang violence.

In Vancouver the street sex work population is estimated to be between 1,000 and 2,000 individuals.<sup>4</sup> However, studies suggest that at least 80% of sex work in Canada's urban centres takes place indoors and is less visible than street sex work.<sup>5</sup> The majority of people engaged in sex work overall are women (80%), while about 20% are males and transgendered persons.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ekberg GS, Wahlberg K. The Swedish Approach: A European Union Country Fights Sex Trafficking. *Solutions Journal*. (2:2) March 2011

<sup>3</sup> UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (ratified by Canada in 1982); the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, (ratified by Canada in 1991), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the UN protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Public Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention Against Trans-national Organized crime (ratified by Canada in 2002).

<sup>2</sup> Shannon K, et al. (2009a) Structural and Environmental Barriers to Condom Use Negotiation with Clients Among Female Sex Workers: Implications for HIV-Prevention Strategies and Policy. *American Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 99, No 4, 659-665.

<sup>5</sup> Pivot Legal Society (2006). *Beyond Decriminalization: Sex work, human rights and a new framework for law reform*. Pivot Legal Society: Vancouver, BC.

<sup>6</sup> *Living in Community. Balancing Perspectives on Vancouver's Sex Industry: Action Plan*. June 2007.

The urban Aboriginal population is vastly over-represented in street sex work; while comprising 2% of Vancouver's population, about 40% of street sex workers are Aboriginal, and several authors draw a direct link to the negative effects of colonization, including the residential school experience, as contributing factors.<sup>78</sup> The Pickton murders included an over representation of Aboriginal women, many of whom were involved in sex work. Indoors, immigrant and women of colour are over represented, with estimates that 40% of indoor sex workers are immigrant or visible minority women.

Research cites various risk factors for involvement in street sex work including poverty, housing instability, and history of sexual abuse. Long-term effects of street sex work involvement include chronic illness, high rates of violence, addictions and mental health issues. Less research has been conducted on indoor sex work, however known risk factors include language and cultural barriers, unstable immigration status, trafficking, links to organized crime and low income. Violence, threats of violence, and lack of ability to access protection due to fear of reprisals or of being charged under the Criminal Code or immigration legislation can be significant barriers to the safety of those exchanging sex for money indoors.

The numbers of sexually exploited children and youth in Canada and BC are unknown and available research is focussed on high-risk youth rather than the on overall youth population. Of at-risk youth studied, young women/girls comprise about 80% of those involved in the exchange of sex for food, money, or other goods, and young men/boys about 20%.<sup>9</sup> Aboriginal youth are over-represented. Risk factors for all at risk youth include history of abuse, family poverty, homelessness, inadequate housing, placement in government care, hidden disabilities, lack of community and cultural connection, and more generally, social isolation. Negative effects include poor physical and mental health, addictions, exposure to violence and homelessness. One recent Vancouver study shows that all children and youth may be at risk of unsafe encounters on line, meaning that the potential risk for the overall youth population is increasing.<sup>10</sup>

The presence and impacts of sexually exploited children and youth and adult sex work are not unique to specific neighbourhoods in Vancouver; while street prostitution is more visible, all neighbourhoods can be affected. Negative impacts of street sex work include nuisance, exposure to high risk waste, and noise, which may result in residents, business owners, employees and customers feeling uncomfortable and unsafe.<sup>11</sup> Residents also complain about business establishments where sex work may be taking place indoors. Importantly, research demonstrates that Vancouver residents are also concerned for the health and safety of those involved in sex work and their well being.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Gray, Linda (2011). First Nations 101: Tons of Stuff You Need to Know About First Nations People, p. 109-110.

<sup>8</sup> Aboriginal Women's Network: Statement Opposing Legalized Prostitution & Total Decriminalization of Prostitution, December 6, 2007

<sup>9</sup> Ministry for Public Safety & Solicitor General: Sexual Exploitation of Youth in BC. 2001

<sup>10</sup> McCreary Centre Society (2006). Against the Odds: A profile of marginalized and street-involved youth in BC. McCreary Centre Society: Vancouver, BC.

<sup>11</sup> Living in Community. Balancing Perspectives on Vancouver's Sex Industry: Action Plan. June 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Louie, C. (2009). Community attitudes to prostitution: The Downtown Eastside and Strathcona. (Unpublished BA honours thesis). Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC.

## Discussion

The approach taken in preparing this report included a review of past and current City initiatives, seeking input from diverse stakeholders and research sources, considering the full range of social development tools available to the City, and based on this, staff has developed a comprehensive framework and actions for moving forward.

### *i. Learning from the Past and Building on Current Efforts*

In the 1980's and 1990's, the City responded to neighbourhood complaints, such as street disorder, traffic, needles and the visibility of street level prostitution (West End, Mount Pleasant, and Strathcona) with traffic calming measures and increased enforcement by the Vancouver Police Department. These measures displaced individuals involved in street sex work, transferred problems to other neighbourhoods, and placed individuals in more isolated areas, creating additional vulnerability and safety risks; in addition, obstructed streets that were intended to discourage traffic have since become annoying inconveniences to residents and businesses.

Over the past 20 years various initiatives have been undertaken by the City, senior governments, other funding bodies and service agencies to address issues. An inventory of current initiatives was developed to map activities and identify gaps for this report and is available upon request.

City initiatives are varied and annual costs total over \$2 million, as reflected in the chart below.

**Chart I - Current City of Vancouver Initiatives**

City Services		Annual Cost (Estimate)
Policing	VICE Squad	\$1.5 million
	Sex Industry Liaison Officer	\$ 80,000
	School Liaison Officers	Proportion of time
Parks and Community Services	Park Board Youth Workers: There are 20 youth workers located at community centres across the City and each dedicate some time toward prevention and outreach for at risk youth	Proportion of time
	Social services grants to address sexual exploitation prevention, provide youth at risk services, and supporting sex worker safety	\$550,000

### *ii. Information Gathering*

Staff reviewed over 50 research articles\*, conducted interviews, and held or participated in meetings with approximately 60 diverse stakeholders between January and June 2011 for the

\*A listing of research collected to prepare this report is noted in Appendix B.

purpose of identifying key issues, existing good practice, service gaps and potential strategies for the City's consideration. Participants included:

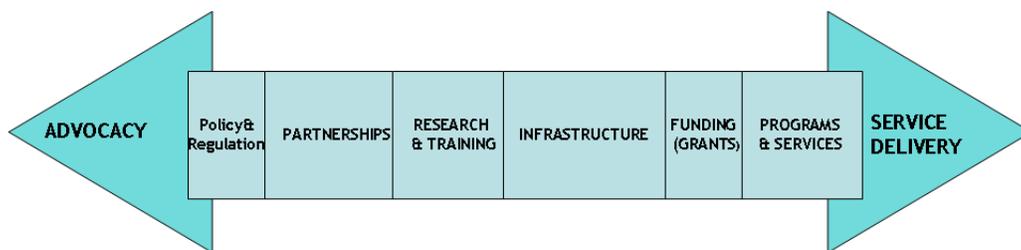
- Civic departments (Parks, VPD, Engineering, Community Services, Law)
- Council advisory committees (Women; LGBTQ; Family Court Youth Justice)
- Urban Aboriginal organizations
- Relatives of Vancouver's missing and murdered women from the DTES
- Equality-seeking women's and social justice groups
- Youth serving and women serving organizations
- Experiential persons
- Business Improvement Associations
- Researchers
- Representatives of other municipalities (Toronto, Edmonton, Hamilton)
- Senior governments (National Crime Prevention Centre, Departments of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Vancouver Board of Education, Vancouver Coastal Health, Ministry of Children and Families, Solicitor General, Social Development, BC Housing)
- BC Representative for Children and Youth

While many of the issues and suggested roles for the City that are reflected in this report were informed by this feedback, staff note that the actions presented are not exhaustive and represent a starting place. To ensure relevance, ongoing monitoring of issues needs to take place, together with continued dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders and other jurisdictions.

### *iii. Utilizing Range of Social Development Tools*

The full range of City tools ranging from direct service delivery to funding, training, partnerships, policy and advocacy were considered for the proposed approach and assisted staff in identifying current as well as the full range of potential City responses.

**Figure II - City of Vancouver Social Development Tools**



## **V. A Comprehensive Framework for Action:**

Figure III below reflects strategic elements of a coordinated framework to prevent sexual exploitation and address the needs of vulnerable adults involved in sex work.

**Figure III**



Key strategic elements of the framework are described below. The recommended actions flowing from each of the elements of the framework are attached in Appendices C and D. Appendix C articulates actions for the City, whereby the City has the mandate, tools and leverage capacity to carry the actions out. Appendix D spells out suggested actions that are more appropriate for the consideration of senior governments.

*1. Leadership and Coordination* - Coordinated approaches among key stakeholders, including government, law enforcement, various community groups and researchers are a best practice, make best use of limited resources, while integrating knowledge, skills & actions. It is proposed that the City create a task force to implement the actions presented in Appendix C, while senior governments lead a coordinated effort across the Metro region (See Appendix D).

*2. Prevention and Awareness:* More needs to be done to raise awareness of sexual exploitation and prevention among older children, parents, teachers and social service groups working with children and youth, and the public. The proposed actions for the City and senior governments help address the need for increased awareness of the issues surrounding sexual exploitation and sex work. On a more systemic level, much can be done to address root causes and enhance prevention including strengthening child development services and supports, youth services, housing options, adequate income, connections to culture and community, and natural neighbourhood surveillance whereby neighbours look out for each others well being.

*3. Promoting Health and Safety for All Citizens:* All citizens have a right to the protection of their health and safety. Those that are most vulnerable, including children, women and girls, Aboriginal populations, and transgendered persons, are often more at risk of sexual exploitation and violence. City actions include reviewing opportunities to use existing City infrastructure such as fire halls and community centres to provide immediate response to citizen safety, and to undertake a pedestrian lighting project that will enhance safety for all residents, while senior government partners can improve access to health care services and addictions treatment.

*4. Investment in Services, Supports and Exiting-* Significant gaps exist in services and supports, including those supporting prevention of sexual exploitation, exiting prostitution,

and those that address basic health and safety needs of residents. Vancouver’s non profit sector requires either new or additional investments from funding partners to provide services and enhance support systems that build community capacity and resiliency. While the primary mandate for social services rests with senior governments, City staff can play a role in helping to leverage city contributions through partnerships with senior government and other funding organizations.

*5. Alignment and Coordination of Regulation and Enforcement Efforts* - The City’s mandate is to regulate land use while the criminal code, administered through the VPD, enforces law. City departments, including the Vancouver Police Department, Community Services, Engineering and Parks, can work more cohesively together to prevent sexual exploitation, promote the health and safety of citizens, and minimize negative impacts to neighbourhoods. Further, staff can review current by-laws and policy, and consider good practices and efforts of other jurisdictions, to further align efforts to protect vulnerable individuals and residents.

#### ***PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS***

Resources required for coordination and execution of the action plan will be leveraged through existing resources from Community Services Group and other participating departments, including the VPD, Fire and Rescue Services, Engineering, Parks, and Library Services.

#### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Staff will report back to Council on cost estimates for the proposed action plan and related funding sources.

#### ***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Individuals involved in street based sex work are extremely vulnerable. While research currently underway will help to identify issues experienced by individuals exchanging sex for money indoors, they too face significant risks and lack of protection to health, safety, social services, and supports to exit sex work. Aboriginal populations, males and transgendered sex workers experience multiple barriers and high levels of violence. Those from immigrant communities face significant challenges because of language and other cultural barriers. The sexual exploitation of children and youth comes in many forms, and more recently, is facilitated by the Internet and other technologies. Residents and businesses are affected by a range of issues noted in this report. Comprehensive approaches, involving a diverse range of stakeholders, are identified as a best practice in addressing the issues.

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Definition of Terms:

*Exiting:* Transition undertaken by individuals distancing themselves from sex work

*John/Date/Client:* Someone who buys sexual services

*Prostitution, Sex Work:* Provision of sexual services by adults in exchange for money, protection, drugs

*Sexual Exploitation:* A person who is in a position of trust or authority towards a young person, who is a person with whom the young person is in a relationship of dependency or who is in a relationship with a young person that is exploitative of the young person and who,

- a) for a sexual purpose, touches, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, any part of the body of the young person; or
- b) for a sexual purpose, invites, counsels or incites a young person to touch, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, the body of any person, including the body of the person who so invites, counsels or incites and the body of the young person

*UN Definition of Trafficking:* Article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html>) defines Trafficking in Persons as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs

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**Recommended actions where the City can play a leadership role appropriate to its role and mandate:**

<b><i>Strategic Direction #1: Leadership and Coordination</i></b>			
Goal: Convene departments and engage a diverse range of external stakeholders to implement actions			
<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1. Convene a city-wide task group to implement actions	Advancement of goals and issues City leadership	Community organizations Researchers Senior Governments	Coordination will require City leadership and commitment from various staff departments
<b><i>Strategic Direction #2: Enhanced Prevention and Awareness</i></b>			
Goal: Build prevention factors <sup>13</sup> and enhance awareness/knowledge of issues within City departments and external stakeholders, including residents			
2. Enhance training, development, and information-sharing opportunities for front line City staff and external government and non government stakeholders	Ongoing awareness and understanding of issues, trends, and available resources	Government and Community Partners Researchers	Front line City staff to include Park Board youth workers, VPD, Fire and Rescue Services, Licensing and Inspections
3. Front line city staff can play a role in disseminating information materials to individuals, and organizations working with at risk populations, on prevention, health and safety, as well as provide referrals to available resources and supports	Improved awareness on prevention, health and safety, and exiting referrals among City staff and residents Awareness of available supports/services among residents	Community Partners Senior Governments	

<sup>13</sup> Prevention factors include: adequate income, family supports, housing, connection to culture and community, natural neighbourhood surveillance, early childhood education, youth programs, education and raising awareness.

<b><i>Strategic Direction #2: Enhanced Prevention and Awareness</i></b>			
Goal: Build prevention factors <sup>14</sup> and enhance awareness/knowledge of issues internally and externally			
<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Notes</b>
4. Support neighbourhood-based safety and violence prevention initiatives and projects through grants and other City tools	<p>Increased safety and sense of security for at risk populations</p> <p>Enhanced neighbourhood capacity to prevent and respond to issues</p>	<p>Residents</p> <p>BIA's</p> <p>Community Policing</p> <p>Centres</p> <p>Community organizations</p> <p>Senior Governments</p> <p>Funding partners</p>	<p>Aligns with other City interests including civic participation, pedestrian safety, public realm improvements, and crime prevention</p> <p>Given the high proportion of women and girls impacted by violence, it has been recommended that funded projects be assessed through a gender based lens.</p>
5. Continue City participation with the Province and community partners in the annual "Stop the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth Awareness Week"	<p>Increased awareness of sexual exploitation among youth, parents, educators and communities</p> <p>Enhanced prevention of child and youth sexual exploitation</p>	<p>Senior Governments</p> <p>Community partners</p>	<p>In 2011 in partnership with the Solicitor General and Vancouver Board of Education staff supported:</p> <p>a) Training for 120 service providers to address safety concerns when working with sexually exploited youth</p> <p>b) A forum for 100 parents and community members to address online safety for children and youth</p>

<sup>14</sup> Prevention factors include: adequate income, family supports, housing, connection to culture and community, natural neighbourhood surveillance, early childhood education, youth programs, education and raising awareness.

<b>Strategic Direction #2: Enhanced Prevention and Awareness</b>			
Goal: Build prevention factors <sup>15</sup> and enhance awareness/knowledge of issues internally and externally			
<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Notes</b>
6. Focus the 2012 -2021 Housing and Homelessness Strategy and the 2012-2014 Action Plan on improving coordination with housing partners and improving the quality of existing services for the homeless, sex workers, youth, and adults who are exiting	<p>Training for housing and outreach staff to raise awareness of sex work and exiting issues</p> <p>Improved and shared knowledge about value and key elements of the low barrier housing approach with housing partners</p> <p>Shared knowledge about what works in terms of housing and support services for exiting sex workers and sexually exploited youth</p>	<p>BC Housing</p> <p>Non-profit Housing Providers</p> <p>Community Organizations</p>	<p>Adequate housing is a core need for sex workers living in poverty<sup>16</sup></p> <p>Women, youth, Aboriginal people &amp; transgendered populations have specific needs requiring customized training, training protocols, policies and guidelines to create safe, appropriate services<sup>17</sup></p>
7. Through the Joint Child Care Council, work with partners to a) increase availability of Aboriginal child care and b) increase opportunities for after school education programs	<p>Key service available for Aboriginal families to assist with off reserve integration to urban centres</p> <p>Increased ability for employment for parents</p> <p>Increased safety and resilience of children and youth</p>	<p>Aboriginal Organizations</p> <p>Child care providers</p> <p>Joint Child Care Council</p> <p>Senior Governments</p>	<p>Aboriginal women need access to culturally responsive child care to assist with transition from reserve communities and to access employment and parenting supports.</p> <p>Sexual exploitation prevention education needs to begin well before high school.</p> <p>Children aged 9 - 12 are vulnerable due to lack of after-school care<sup>18</sup></p>

<sup>15</sup> Prevention factors include: adequate income, family supports, housing, connection to culture and community, natural neighbourhood surveillance, early childhood education, youth programs, education and raising awareness.

<sup>16</sup> Pivot Legal Society (2004). *Voices for Dignity: A Call to End the Harms Caused by Canada's Sex Trade Laws. (N=82)*  
<http://www.pivotlegal.org/Publications/reportsvfd.htm>

<sup>17</sup> Bayes, S. (2009). *Bridging the Gap: Shelter case management in British Columbia*. Vancouver: Elizabeth Fry Society.  
<http://www.elizabethfry.com/publications/articles.htm>

<sup>18</sup> BC Recreation and Parks Association. *Addressing the After-School Hours: An Environmental Scan of After-School Programming Outside of Licensed Childcare for Children Aged 6 to 12 in BC*. 2010. p8.

### ***Strategic Direction #3: Promoting Citizen Health and Safety***

Goal: Support the health and safety of all citizens by utilizing current City infrastructure and assets, working with key partners, and through neighbourhood based-dialogue

Priority Actions	Outcomes	Partners	Notes
<p>8. Improve interdepartmental coordination to enhance monitoring, information sharing, and enforcement action on problem premises where there are safety concerns and potential harm to sex workers, and/or where trafficking/exploitation may be taking place.</p>	<p>Improved alignment and communication between City departments</p> <p>Enhanced health and safety for individuals and neighbourhoods</p> <p>Enhanced referrals to information, social supports and services, including exiting</p>	<p>Community Organizations</p> <p>Provincial Government e.g. Solicitor General</p>	<p>To include Vancouver Police Department, Licensing and Inspections, Development Services, Social Development</p>
<p>9. Pilot a pedestrian lighting initiative in the Renfrew-Collingwood neighbourhood in consultation with residents</p>	<p>Improved safety &amp; security for all residents in the neighbourhood</p> <p>Model can be replicated in other Vancouver neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Community organizations</p> <p>Senior Government</p>	<p>Aligns with other City objectives including Greenest City, pedestrian safety, and crime prevention interests of the City</p> <p>Based out of Collingwood Neighbourhood House and in partnership with the BIA, Community Policing, residents and other stakeholders, the neighbourhood is engaged in a project supported by the Vancouver Agreement to make the neighbourhood safe for everyone, including residents and sex workers.</p>

<b><i>Strategic Direction #3: Promoting Citizen Health and Safety</i></b>			
Goal: Support the health and safety of all citizens by utilizing current City infrastructure and assets, working with key partners, and through neighbourhood based-dialogue			
<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Notes</b>
10. Identify the potential for City staff working in civic facilities, including fire halls, libraries and recreation centres, to receive training and information/referral materials so that City staff are able to respond to the safety needs of all citizens who may be at risk, including women, children, and youth	Public safety and sense of security enhanced for all residents.	Community Centre Associations Community Policing Centres Community Organizations	Other jurisdictions (Britain) have transformed fire halls into places of refuge.  The need for safe public spaces in 2006-2007 was identified in <u>Living in Community Action Plan (2007)</u>  Training for City staff (Action 1) will complement or form part of this strategy
<b><i>Strategic Direction #4: Investment in Services, Supports and Exiting</i></b>			
Goal: Provide and leverage new, sustainable investment from funding partners.			
11. Use City social grants more strategically to increase leverage in investments for prevention, health and safety, and supports need for individuals to exit sex work	Increased awareness, safety & health Increased opportunities for exiting Increased partnerships and leverage funding opportunities	Community organizations  Non-profit partners Senior Government  Foundations	The Social Grant Review report (RTS # 9321) identifies funding gaps including neighbourhood safety and violence prevention.
12. Include individuals exiting sex work as part of the City's supported employment program	Increased opportunities for exiting Increased knowledge/awareness of the needs of sex workers who are exiting.	Community organizations	The City's supported employment initiative has successfully provided employment opportunities for individuals recovering from addictions.

<b><i>Strategic Direction #5 Align Regulation and Enforcement Efforts</i></b>			
Goal: Align efforts to promote neighbourhood health and safety, responsible business practices and mitigate negative neighbourhood impacts			
<b>Priority Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Notes</b>
13. Strengthen the License By-law to better protect the safety and security of sex workers at premises where there is potential for safety risks, human trafficking/exploitation	Aligned role of the City in licensing with municipal responsibilities and jurisdictions	Community organizations	Consultation will continue with other jurisdictions to identify good practices.  As part of this review process the License By-law language will be reviewed to ensure relevance.
14. Review licensing regulation and enforcement practices of other jurisdictions to prevent exploitation and negative impacts of sex work on neighbourhoods	Alignment with key elements of the Framework for Action: prevention, health and safety, service and support (including exiting)	Community organizations	Municipalities have no authority under the Constitution to create criminal law; may only regulate matters within their jurisdiction, such as local land use and the licensing of businesses <sup>19</sup>  City staff are reviewing & monitoring approaches in other jurisdictions (e.g. City of Toronto, City of Edmonton) to determine results and applicability to Vancouver
15. VPD will make information available Vancouver residents on policies & practices related to arrests for prostitution offences, monitoring and enforcement of business establishments, neighbourhood complaints, and displacement of sex work to other neighbourhoods.	Increased public understanding of VPD enforcement related practices		

<sup>19</sup> Pivot Legal Society (2006). *Beyond Decriminalization: Sex work, human rights and a new framework for law reform*. Pivot Legal Society: Vancouver, BC.

**Strategies and Actions for Senior Government Consideration:** Where leadership from either provincial ministries or federal departments is most appropriate given the City’s limited mandate, suggested actions for the consideration of senior governments are described below.

<b><i>Strategic Direction #1: Leadership and Coordination</i></b>			
Goal: Convene departments and engage a diverse range of external stakeholders to implement actions			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Identified Gap/Issue</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
1. Coordinate with Metro municipalities, enforcement agencies, non governmental agencies, and other stakeholders	Facilitate collective action through provincial leadership	Need for multi stakeholder coordination	BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
<b><i>Strategic Direction #2: Enhanced Prevention and Awareness</i></b>			
Goal: Build prevention factors <sup>20</sup> and enhance awareness/knowledge of issues across governments and with the public			
2. Bolster public awareness to prevent child and youth sexual exploitation	Enhanced public awareness Improved resident engagement Increased local coordination	Annual awareness-raising campaign requires additional resources	BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
3. Improve cross-ministry coordination & reinstate funding for community based partnerships to respond to sexual exploitation and sex work	Enhanced community and government capacity to respond	Lack of coordination and resources	BC Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

<sup>20</sup> Prevention factors include: adequate income, family supports, housing, connection to culture and community, natural neighbourhood surveillance, early childhood education, youth programs, education and raising awareness.

<b><i>Strategic Direction #2: Enhanced Prevention and Awareness</i></b>			
Goal: Build prevention factors <sup>21</sup> and enhance awareness/knowledge of issues			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Identified Gap/Issue</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
4. Integrate information and education on the prevention of child and youth sexual exploitation within existing and related Vancouver Board of Education (VBE) programming	<p>Increase awareness of the sexual exploitation of children and youth and enhance prevention among Vancouver students and parents</p> <p>Decrease incidents of child and youth sexual exploitation</p> <p>Increase the safety of schools and neighbourhoods</p>	The VBE has several child and youth programs (some of which also involve parents) linked to related issues such as sexual health, drug use prevention and gang prevention, however no specific information on child and youth sexual exploitation is currently offered. There is an opportunity to integrate information on child and youth sexual exploitation prevention into these exiting programs.	Vancouver Board of Education
5. Include the prevention of child and youth sexual exploitation within existing and future prevention and justice initiatives	<p>Increase resources directed towards the prevention of child and youth sexual exploitation</p> <p>Create a gender-balanced approach to prevention efforts</p>	Current funding for youth prevention initiatives focuses on youth gang prevention for boys and young men without including the related issue of child and youth sexual exploitation <sup>22</sup>	Public Safety Canada - National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC)

<sup>21</sup> Prevention factors include: adequate income, family supports, housing, connection to culture and community, natural neighbourhood surveillance, early childhood education, youth programs, education and raising awareness.

<sup>22</sup> A Sikka, Institute On Governance and Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians. Trafficking of Aboriginal Women and Girls in Canada. 2009.

<b><i>Strategic Direction #2: Enhanced Prevention and Awareness</i></b>			
Goal: Build prevention factors <sup>23</sup> and enhance awareness/knowledge of issues internally and externally			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Identified Gap/Issue</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
6. Invest in Aboriginal focussed child care and after-school supports for 9-12 year olds, including focussed programs for girls and for Aboriginal children	<p>Increased capacity of after-school care to engage and accommodate children ages 9-12, with a particular focus on girls and Aboriginal children</p> <p>Improved safety, resilience and confidence of at-risk children</p>	<p>Consultation with Lower Mainland service providers identified the “middle years” as a gap in funding and program supports for after-school care; there is currently no overarching strategy or systemic support for after-school programming in BC<sup>24</sup></p> <p>Children of this age group are most likely to engage in risky behaviour and conflict with the law between 3 and 6 pm<sup>25</sup></p>	<p>BC Ministry of Education</p> <p>BC Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development</p>

<sup>23</sup> Prevention factors include: adequate income, family supports, housing, connection to culture and community, natural neighbourhood surveillance, early childhood education, youth programs, education and raising awareness.

<sup>24</sup> BC Recreation and Parks Association. Addressing the After-School Hours: An Environmental Scan of After-School Programming Outside of Licensed Childcare for Children Aged 6 to 12 in BC. 2010. [http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/recreation\\_parks/facilities/documents/Addressing\\_After\\_School\\_Report.pdf](http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/recreation_parks/facilities/documents/Addressing_After_School_Report.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Statistics Canada. Study: Where and when youth commit police-reported crimes. The Daily: June 29, 2010. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/100629/dq100629c-eng.htm>

<b><i>Strategic Direction #3: Promoting Citizen Health and Safety</i></b>			
Goal: Support the health and safety of all citizens by utilizing current City infrastructure and assets, working with key partners, and through neighbourhood based projects			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Identified Gap/Issue</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
7. Develop education and information/training for health care providers, develop protocols and practices, and identify how environments for primary health care and addiction withdrawal services can be made safer and more accessible	<p>Improved access to health care, mental health and detox services</p> <p>Improved outcomes for individuals struggling with addiction</p> <p>Increased safety and security for women accessing detox services</p>	<p>Need for increased awareness across front line health care services and protocols/practices</p> <p>Women may feel unsafe when accessing withdrawal/detox services alongside men due in part to histories of trauma and abuse</p>	Vancouver Coastal Health Providence Health Care
<b><i>Strategic Direction #4: Investment in Services, Supports and Exiting</i></b>			
Goal: Provide and leverage new, sustainable investment through funding partnerships.			
8. Invest in peer-based life skills programs assisting transitions for First Nations individuals and families from reserves to urban centres	<p>Improve community and cultural connections for Aboriginal people who are making transitions from reserves, helping them to succeed and contribute in an urban environment.</p>	<p>Programs supporting urban Aboriginal people, including those transitioning off-reserve, lack sufficient and secure funding from senior governments</p>	Aboriginal Affairs & Northern Development Canada

***Strategic Direction #4: Investment in Services, Supports and Exiting***

Goal: Provide and leverage new, sustainable investment through funding partnerships.

Actions	Outcomes	Identified Gap/Issue	Lead Agency
<p>9. Improve the quality and quantity of existing housing and related services for the homeless, sex workers, youth, and adults who are exiting the sex trade</p>	<p>Training for housing and outreach staff to raise awareness of sex work and exiting issues</p> <p>Improved and shared knowledge about value and key elements of the low barrier housing approach with housing partners</p> <p>Shared knowledge about what works in terms of housing and support services for exiting sex workers and sexually exploited youth</p>	<p>Adequate housing is a core need for sex workers living in poverty<sup>26</sup></p> <p>Women, youth, Aboriginal people &amp; transgendered populations have specific needs requiring customized training, training protocols, policies and guidelines to create safe, appropriate services<sup>27</sup></p>	<p>BC Housing</p>
<p>10. Identify effective practices for individuals who are exiting the sex trade</p>	<p>Best practices and tools to support and inform current and future housing, exiting, and employment-related initiatives</p>	<p>Lack of information about effective practices for supporting exiting youth</p> <p>Lack of effective information about effective practices for housing and employment supports for adults who are exiting</p>	<p>BC Solicitor General and Ministry for Public Safety</p>

<sup>26</sup> Pivot Legal Society (2004). *Voices for Dignity: A Call to End the Harms Caused by Canada's Sex Trade Laws*. (N=82) <http://www.pivotlegal.org/Publications/reportsvfd.htm>

<sup>27</sup> Bayes, S. (2009). *Bridging the Gap: Shelter case management in British Columbia*. Vancouver: Elizabeth Fry Society. <http://www.elizabethfry.com/publications/articles.htm>

<b><i>Strategic Direction #4: Investment in Services, Supports and Exiting</i></b>			
Goal: Provide and leverage new, sustainable investment through funding partnerships.			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Identified Gap/Issue</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
11. Invest in the expansion of the Mobile Access Project (MAP) services to other Lower Mainland municipalities	<p>Increase access to MAP van services to include those involved in sex work outside Vancouver's boundaries</p> <p>Facilitate collaboration across municipal boundaries</p>	<p>Sex workers travel across municipal boundaries</p> <p>Access to the van increases health and safety and reduces harm for vulnerable women at night when no other services are open</p>	BC Solicitor General and Ministry for Public Safety
12. Invest in a 24-hour drop-in and/or an overnight shelter for women sex workers	Women are able to access a place of safety over a 24-hour period.	Need for a safe place for women in the DTES that is open 24 hours	BC Housing
13. Build on good practice for at risk youth, and increase outreach services, currently supported through City funding, for youth in the Downtown Eastside, including Aboriginal youth	<p>Improved access to information and resources</p> <p>Increased connections between youth and services</p>	<p>Programs such as Roving Leaders and Red Fox are positive examples of youth outreach initiatives that should be provided city-wide</p> <p>Additional youth outreach in the DTES is identified as a specific need by youth-serving agencies. Currently the City funds existing youth outreach in the DTES.</p>	BC Ministry of Child and Family Development
14. Fund peer-based supports to assist individuals diverted through Community Court, in particular Urban Aboriginals	<p>Improved relationships</p> <p>Improved ability to fulfill court order</p> <p>Improved connection to culture and community</p> <p>Increased life skills</p>	Identified as a key support to promote prevention, exiting support. Individuals may require day to day peer assistance, connections to culture, help attend appointments, services and resources	<p>Attorney General</p> <p>Department of Justice Canada</p>

<b><i>Strategic Direction #4: Investment in Services, Supports and Exiting</i></b>			
Goal: Provide and leverage new, sustainable investment through funding partnerships.			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Identified Gap/Issue</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
15. Invest funds into exiting opportunities in partnership with other funding organizations	Improved opportunities for exiting	The province currently supports one employment related exiting program in Lower Mainland.	Various Ministries
16. Reinvest in Legal Aid, including family, immigration and criminal law	Access to legal service for low income populations including sex workers who come into conflict with the law	Cuts to Legal Aid have created barriers to legal support for low income populations, including sex workers	Attorney General
17. Invest in income supports and commit to a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy	Other provinces, including Ontario, have comprehensive poverty reduction strategies that include adequate wages and supports to help people maintain employment	Poverty is a contributing factor to the survival sex trade. BC has highest child poverty rate in Canada. Vancouver has the highest rate of low income earners among major urban centres in Canada <sup>28</sup>	Social Development
18. Waive processing fees and reduce waiting times for criminal pardons for low income sex workers convicted of prostitution and related crimes	Access to labour market and higher education for marginalized, low income individuals, including Aboriginal and immigrant women	Individuals receiving social assistance, including single mothers, can be forced to engage in sex work because they are unable to gain employment and education due to a previous prostitution conviction. These individuals may not be able to afford the costs of the processing fee to apply for the pardon. Further the waiting time to receive a pardon can be lengthy.	Department of Justice Canada Parole Board Social Development

<sup>28</sup> Conference Board of Canada - July 2011

<b><i>Strategic Direction #5 Align Regulation and Enforcement Efforts</i></b>			
Goal: Align efforts to promote neighbourhood health and safety, responsible business practices and mitigate negative neighbourhood impacts			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Identified Gap/Issue</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>
19. Identify effective options for sentencing johns	Options for sentencing johns	Proponents of the Nordic model support enforcement of prostitution laws against johns. Until recently johns charged under prostitution laws have been provided with diversion to John's school; this option has been put on hold and is currently under review.	Attorney General