2015 Report on Homelessness and Related Actions on SROs

Presentation to City Council
July 7, 2015
Overview of 2015 Homeless Count
Homeless Count 2015

• Standard methodology
• Date: March 24, 2015
• 2014 Comparators:
  – Street Homeless Count 2014: 536
  – Sheltered Homeless Count 2014: 1,267
  – Total Homeless Count 2014: 1,803
• Projection in fall 2014 – possible to end street homelessness based on net incremental units since March count
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Change Since March 12, 2014</th>
<th>Net New/incremental Units</th>
<th>Impact on Housing for Homeless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOU Supportive Housing</td>
<td>• 1134 Burrard&lt;br&gt;• 111 Princess&lt;br&gt;• 2465 Fraser</td>
<td></td>
<td>383</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-MOU Supportive/Non-Market Housing Units</td>
<td>• Kingsway Continental&lt;br&gt;• Taylor Manor</td>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim Housing Units</td>
<td>• 3475 E Hastings (former Ramada)&lt;br&gt;• 395 Kingsway (former Biltmore)&lt;br&gt;• 1335 Howe Street (former Quality Inn)&lt;br&gt;• 1060 Howe</td>
<td></td>
<td>199</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Shelter Beds</td>
<td>• 900 Pacific&lt;br&gt;• 1647 E Pender&lt;br&gt;• Salvation Army Winter Shelter</td>
<td></td>
<td>35 (Beds)</td>
<td>35 (Beds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Housing SRO P3</td>
<td>• Project wide capacity change due to renovations</td>
<td></td>
<td>-68</td>
<td>-68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total New Capacity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>615</strong></td>
<td><strong>458</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Street and Sheltered Homeless 2002-2015

2015 Results:
• Street homeless reduced by 48
• Total homeless individuals reduced by 57
Drivers of Homelessness:
More Work Ahead

Estimated 2015 Homeless without 458 added Units

Number of Homeless in the City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>Sheltered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>1,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>1,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>1,576</td>
<td>1,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>1,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>1,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,715</td>
<td>1,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,602</td>
<td>1,327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,803</td>
<td>946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2,213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vancouver Housing Initiative
A City Everyone Can Call Home
Continued Drivers of Homelessness: Public Sector

- Poverty, severe and untreated mental health and addictions
  - Welfare rates remain unchanged for last 7 years
  - New challenges with online enrollment for social assistance for those most vulnerable
    - In spite of increased homelessness, number of welfare recipients remained constant
  - Continued need for treatment for many living without adequate support for mental health and addictions

- Public Sector institutions:
  - Prisons and hospitals continuing to discharge to street and shelters
  - Youth aging out of foster care; youth leaving foster care
    - 41 youth in care aged out in Vancouver/Richmond between April & September 2013, 22% on Income Assistance
Continued Drivers of Homelessness: Loss of Low Income Housing

- Vancouver’s rental housing 2014 vacancy rate @ 0.5% (including both condo and purpose built rental stock) (CMHC)
- BC Housing wait-list for social housing: 4,000 in Vancouver; 9,500 across Metro Vancouver

DTES particularly affected:
- Rental vacancy rates continue to fall
- SRO vacancy rate (private SRO’s): 14% in 1992; 5% in 2013
- Rents continue to rise faster than incomes
  - Private SRO rents: 60% at welfare rate in 2007; 24% at welfare rate in 2013
  - BCH and non-profit SROs – lower rents, very low turnover (less than 3% per annum)
  - Availability of ~300 affordable (to those on welfare) private SRO rooms lost in 2014
    - Some due to renovations and repairs requiring tenant relocation
General Trends: Homelessness

- Shelters continue to be over-capacity with daily turn-aways
- Downtown BIA reported increase in street youth in the Downtown South
- 2014/2015 changes in Federally funded and regionally allocated Homeless Partnering Strategy (HPS) resulted in interruption, transition and termination of homeless services
- Unmet need for rent supplements and harder to find supply in tight rental market
- Unsheltered homeless, and particularly street homeless with complex needs present significant challenge for health support services
Key Findings: Gender

Total respondents: 1,436

- Male: 1,057 (74%)
- Female: 356 (25%)
- Transgender: 15 (<1%)
- Other: 8 (1%)
Key Findings: Age

Youth total: 199

Total respondents: 1,184

65+ 58 5%
55-64 164 14%
45-54 285 24%
35-44 250 21%
25-34 228 19%
19-24 140 12%
0-18 59 5%

% Percentage of people in that age group
## Key Findings:
### Youth (24 and Under):
Stats from 2015 Count

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Total Youth</th>
<th>Total Homeless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>94 (65%)</td>
<td>1,057 (74%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>42 (29%)</td>
<td>356 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>6 (4%)</td>
<td>15 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2 (1%)</td>
<td>8 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Identity</td>
<td>51 (36%)</td>
<td>342 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Income</td>
<td>50 (34%)</td>
<td>150 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income assistance</td>
<td>39 (27%)</td>
<td>403 (37%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>37 (26%)</td>
<td>229 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addiction</td>
<td>63 (44%)</td>
<td>632 (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Illness</td>
<td>56 (39%)</td>
<td>459 (42%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Findings: Aboriginal Identity

Persons of Aboriginal identity are over-represented among the city’s homeless population (32%), compared to the Vancouver population (2.5%).
Key Findings Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IA/Welfare</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No income</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAS/GIS/CPP</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment INS</td>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total respondents: 1,091
### Key Findings: Health Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addiction/Substance use</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical condition</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental illness</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical disability</td>
<td>386</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total respondents: 1,093

01 Number of people  % Percentage of people in that age group
Key Findings: Homeless from elsewhere

49 of those counted (less than 5%) were from outside Vancouver

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sheltered homeless</th>
<th>Unsheltered homeless</th>
<th>Total homeless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Vancouver</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of BC</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Canada</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total respondents</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Steps to Sustaining Housing for Most Vulnerable:
Overview of Proposed SRA By-law Amendments
Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotels

- Maintaining SROs key focus to ensure affordability over next decade
- They remain the lowest cost housing in the city
- SRO buildings in Vancouver are very old and in poor repair
  - Government and Non-profit operated SROs are in better repair and more affordable
## Open Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Downtown Core*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership Type</th>
<th>Buildings</th>
<th>Rooms</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Profit/Government Owned &amp; Operated</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>2,469</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Private Owners</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2,903</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privately Owned &amp; Non-Profit Operated</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,087</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Investor Owners</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>155</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,048</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data Sources: 2013 Low Income Housing Survey and the City of Vancouver Non-Market Database*
SROs: COV Actions to protect the SRO Stock

• 2003: Single Room Accommodation By-law enacted to slow rate of change in the stock and prevent conversion to tourist hostels/hotels

• 2007 and 2009: SRA By-law amended:
  ✓ Increased conditional $5,000 per room fee to $15,000
  ✓ Required the history of the building be considered for all applications
  ✓ Required owner/operator to maintain a standardized registration form for every unit
  ✓ Prohibit nightly rentals (previously permitted in 10% of rooms)
SROs:
COV Actions to protect the SRO Stock

• 2011: Housing and Homelessness Strategy - sets target to replace 1,000 SRO rooms with self-contained social housing

• 2012: SRO Task Force struck to identify ways to improve living conditions for SRO tenants

• 2013: Rental Properties Standards (RPS) Database – tool to motivate owners & landlords to maintain their properties [vancouver.ca/saferental](vancouver.ca/saferental)

• 2014: Standards of Maintenance By-law amended to expedite City undertaking repairs at owners expense for continued non compliance

• 2014: DTES Plan and SRO Strategy – focused on improving building condition, support to tenants while maintaining affordability
Current SRA By-law

SRA Permit required if:
• Loss of rooms
• Material change to a room (addition of new fixtures, bathroom or cooking facilities)

Refuse

Approve

No Conditions

Conditions may include any of the following:
• Tenant Relocation Plan
• Housing Agreement (secure rents)
• Section 219 Covenant (secure tenure)
• Heritage Revitalization Agreement
• $15,000/room
SROs: Improve Building Condition and Prevent Tenant Displacement

The Challenge:

• Minor renovations currently do not require an SRA permit
• Minor repairs can result in displacement of tenants
• Tenant Relocation Plans are not a requirement of a Building or Trades permits

Proposed SRA By-law amendment

• require an SRA permit for “minor repairs” that will result in the displacement of a tenant
• Require a Tenant Relocation Plan as a condition of the permit
The Challenge:

• Increasing investment interest in the stock
• Current $15k amount for a converted/demolished room not sufficient to replace room

Proposed SRA By-law amendment

• Increases fee for permanent removal of room from SRA by-law from $15,000 to $125,000
  • Manage rate of change
  • Closer to real cost of unit replacement
• The money will be deposited into a reserve fund (current practice) to provide replacement housing for any rooms that are removed from SRA By-law designation
SRA Permit required if:
- Material change to a room (addition of new fixtures, bathroom or cooking facilities)
- Loss of room(s)
- Minor repairs that result in tenant displacement

Conditions may include any of the following:
- Tenant Relocation Plan
- Housing Agreement (secure affordability)
- Section 219 Covenant (secure tenure)
- Heritage Revitalization Agreement
- $125,000/room if permanently removed from SRA by-law
Tenant Relocation Plan
Requirements by SRA Permit Type Where Tenants will be Displaced

- Minor repairs
  - Tenant Relocation Plan:
    - Comparable or better accommodation
    - Re-location and moving expenses
    - First right of refusal to renovated room at tenant contribution to rent paid prior to renovation

- Room demolished/converted but remain SRA designated OR removed from SRA By-law but replacement housing provided
  - Tenant Relocation Plan:
    - Comparable or better accommodation
    - Re-location and moving expenses
    - First right of refusal and staff will work with owner to optimize affordability in replacement housing

- Room permanently removed from SRA By-law designation
  - Tenant Relocation Plan:
    - Comparable or better accommodation
    - Re-location and moving expenses

Proposed SRA By-law Amendment - TRP by SRA permit type
Improving Conditions and Maintaining Affordability in SRA rooms

The Challenge:

- Stock aging and in need of repair
- Represents ~5000 rooms for low income tenants
- City unable to provide grants to private owners

Proposed Action

- Explore partnership program with VanCity and others to identify options for the establishment of a grant/loan fund to support the upgrading of the privately owned SRO stock
- Report back on options to allocate up to $2m from the 2015 – 2018 Capital Plan to leverage additional funding and expertise to secure and upgrade the stock and maintain affordability
SROs:
Special program targeted at private owners

Maintaining Affordability
The Challenge:
• Higher tenant turnover in SRAs than rest of rental stock
• Rent increases necessary to support building upgrades
• Rent increases not affordable to tenants on Income Assistance

Proposed Action
• Recommend amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act to that would tie annual rent increases to the room rather than the tenant
  • ensure that rent would only increase once per year in accordance with the approved annual provincial rent increase and not with every tenant move
SROs: Support for Complex Tenants

The Challenge

- City and academic partner research done in the development of the DTES Plan indicated that at least two-thirds of people who are homeless and 4,000 SRO tenants require some level of support to live independently.
- Approximately 2,100 SRO tenants currently require additional support (The Hotel Study, Honer et al. 2013)

Proposed Actions:

- Request Province expand supports to tenants struggling with mental health and addictions living in private SROs
- Continue working with Providence and VCH to strengthen community supports for SRO tenants and people with no fixed address discharged from hospitals
Looking Ahead:
What Works
New Opportunities
Build on What Works - Increase Supply of Affordable Housing

- New Supply of Social and Supported housing to enable replacement of SRO stock and provide permanent housing options for street and shelter homeless
- Increase number of rent supplements available through Provincial Homelessness Prevention Program
- Work with other municipalities in the region to share information and best practice to enable more housing to be built across the region
Focus on New Opportunities

• Secure interim & permanent affordable housing options, and shelter spaces for the 1,800 street and shelter homeless

• Pilot program with VCH and BCH to create more capacity for homeless people in existing supportive housing by providing permanent move-on affordable housing choices for those needing less support

• Develop targeted housing, shelter and interim options for populations at risk of homelessness:
  – Youth transitioning out of foster care or at risk
  – Individuals of Aboriginal descent
  – Women who have experience violence or are at risk
  – People leaving correctional or health care systems
Build on What Works - Provide Necessary Income and Supports

- Improve pathways out of homelessness using Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT) to identify appropriate housing & support needs and create flow in existing supported housing.

- Increase welfare rates to reflect increased operating costs and rents
Any Questions?