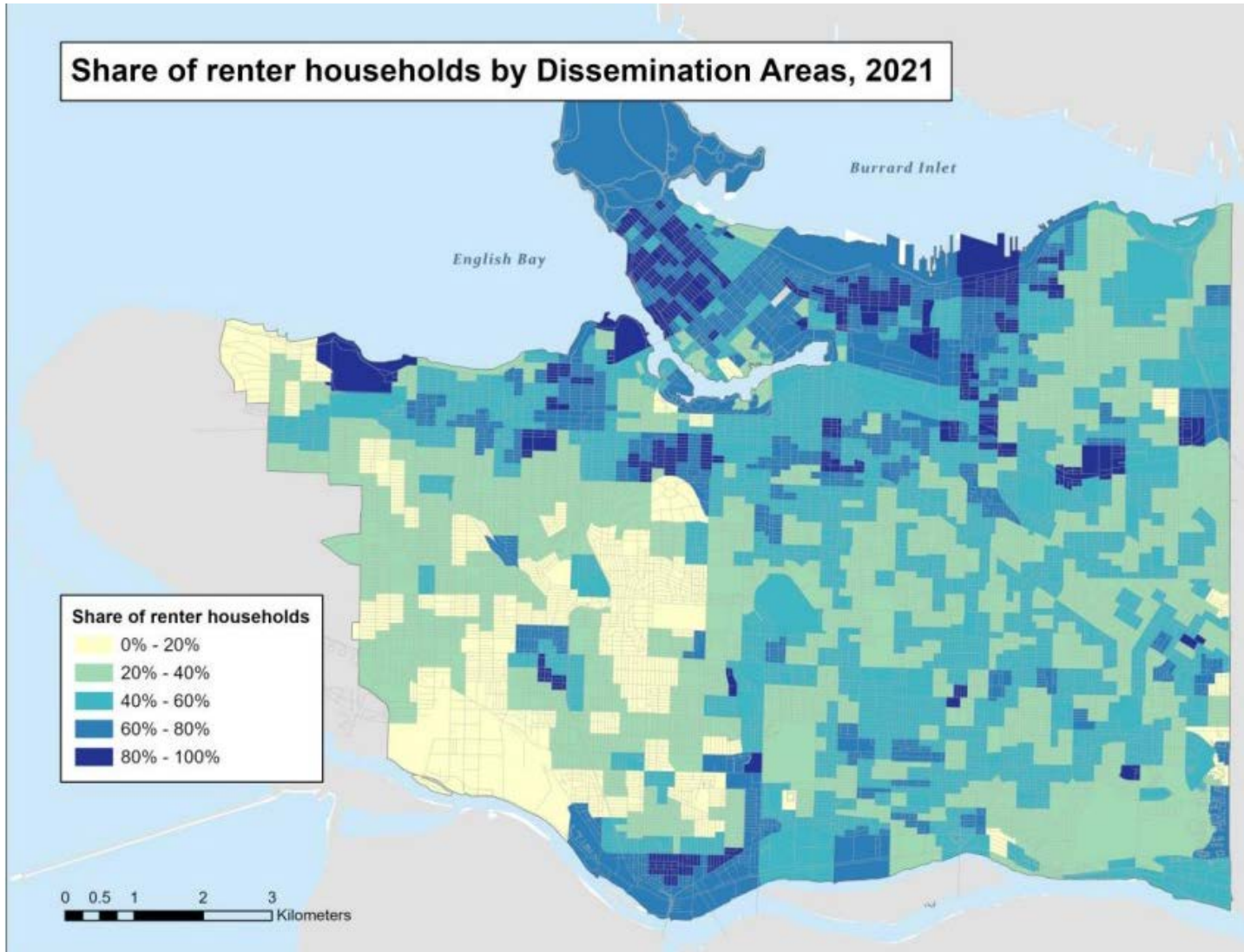


Renter Office Update & Direction

Presentation to Vancouver City Council

January 17, 2023

55% of Vancouver households rent their homes



“We are a
City of
Renters”

Recommendation A: Renter Office

A. THAT Council endorse the continuation of services for renters through the City of Vancouver Renter Office

- particularly for renters impacted by City plans, policies and regulations such as the Vancouver Plan, Broadway Plan and the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy.

Recommendation A: Renter Office

Objective: Provide a point of entry & direct assistance for renters

Example: Renter Enquiry Line

- Phone line and email answered by RO staff
- Help renters navigate the complex rental housing landscape and connect to appropriate supports
- 372 enquiries per year (average)

Email: renteroffice@vancouver.ca

Phone: 604-673-8291

Recommendation A: Renter Office

Objective: Educate renters on their rights under policy and the services available

Example: Broadway renter awareness campaign

- Increase awareness of tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities, and the new tenant protections introduced through the Broadway Plan
- Collaboration between Renter Office, PDS and renter-serving organizations
- Social media, print materials and in-person events
- Specific focus on equity-denied groups of renters

Recommendation A: Renter Office

Objective: Enhance staff understanding of renters' needs and priorities to inform policies, programs and strategies that impact renters

Examples:

- Researching impacts of COVID pandemic on renters
- Funding research on evictions
- Convening renter sector organizations to give input on City policies and programs

Recommendation A: Renter Office

Financial Implications:

- Sufficient previously allocated EHT funding for staff to continue to operate the Renter Office for 2023.
- Should Council decide to continue to have the City operate the City's Renter Office as an ongoing service as outlined and recommended in this report, staff will recommend an approach to regularize the service in the 2024 Operating Budget.

Recommendation B: 2023 Renter Services Grants

B. THAT Council approve the continuation of the Renter Services Grants program for 2023

Recommendation B: 2023 Renter Services Grants

Objective:

- Monetary grants to non-profits to enhance education, legal advocacy and support services for Vancouver renters
- Focus on equity-denied groups

Recommendation B: 2023 Renter Services Grants

Financial Implications:

- If Recommendation B of this report is approved, staff will bring forward 2023 Renter Services Grants in Q1 of 2023.
 - \$500,000, source of funding Affordable Housing - EHT Allocation
- Future funding of the Grant program will be considered as part of future years' Operating Budget processes.

Recommendations C & D: Sublease to TRAC & TIs

C. THAT Council approve TRAC Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre Society (TRAC) as the subtenant and non-profit operator of a social facility with services for renters at the City amenity bonus facility at #150 and #200 - 900 Howe St.

D. THAT the City undertake Tenant Improvements at suites #150 and #200 - 900 Howe St.

- *Recommendations C&D requires 2/3 affirmative votes of Council per section 206(1) of the Vancouver Charter.*

Recommendations C & D: Sublease to TRAC & TIs

TRAC provides free legal education, representation and advocacy to tenants across BC on residential tenancy matters.

Anticipated benefits of sublease to TRAC

- Secure and affordable space for renter-serving NPOs
- Co-location of core services for renters
- Increased visibility of renter services
- Tenant improvements to allow for accessible in-person services
- Foundation and structure to build toward a more comprehensive service centre for renters

Recommendations C & D: Sublease to TRAC & TIs

Financial Implications:

- “Grant of space” valued at approx. \$432K over 3 years (\$144K/yr)
- Tenant Improvements (TI): high level cost estimate of up to \$1.2M (EHT allocation)
- TRAC responsible for operating expenses after lease commencement
- Costs accommodated in existing Renter Office budget

Thank you