



COALITION OF VANCOUVER NEIGHBOURHOODS

<http://coalitionvan.org>

info@coalitionvan.org

November 27, 2025

Dear Mayor Ken Sim and Councillors,

Re: Vancouver's Social Housing Initiative (Public Hearing November 27)

Agenda: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20251127/phea20251127ag.htm>

Report: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20251127/documents/phea1rr.pdf>

While we acknowledge the need for social and affordable housing, we are writing to oppose "Vancouver's Social Housing Initiative" going to Public Hearing November 27 since this initiative takes the wrong approach.

Some of the many concerns about this proposal are:

- There was no meaningful consultation with affected residents.
- The area affected is very significant. While not stated in the documentation, staff revealed just the day before the Public Hearing that the policy affects 52,729 land parcels in Vancouver —, nearly 26 square kilometers, and over 49% of Vancouver's residential land area. Residents living with any form of ownership or renting in these areas received no notification of the policies or even the Public Hearing.
- The one-size-fits-all approach of random towers is without any local planning context.
- The policy ignores local area plans, which had been carefully planned by neighbourhoods over many years.
- These towers are out of character with most of the areas identified for this initiative.
- Public oversight and a democratic means of having a say will be undermined, public hearings would be prohibited, and proposals would go directly to Development Permits, in some cases to be decided by one person, the Director of Planning.
- Only 30% will be social housing, the rest will be 70% expensive market rentals.
- The supposed "viability" of projects is based on pro-forma spreadsheets that are not subject to independent scrutiny, so the public and even Council cannot be assured of the value for value.
- Supportive housing at large scales have proven to be a failed model; but if approved, this initiative significantly reduces opportunities for meaningful community input and influence in outcomes.
- This initiative risks displacing many existing tenants in current social housing or existing older rentals (purpose built-rentals as well as secondary suites, both authorized and unauthorized — potentially affecting tens of thousands of renters).
- Opposition to this initiative is greater than support, as shown in the public feedback. The June/July 2025 engagement, when more details were finally provided, shows the majority of respondents were opposed.
- The initiative undermines the intent of the Heritage Conservation Area Bylaw and First Shaughnessy area that are intended for more density through heritage retention options for multifamily conversions and complementary infill, not out of scale towers.

- The initiative contradicts or ignores many policies and programs put in place by three levels of government to promote solar PV renewable energy generation. Threatens the viability of existing and future solar PV installation in the entire Social Housing Initiative area and vicinity, due to potential shadowing.

We encourage Council NOT to approve this initiative due to its many flaws, and NOT to incorporate it into the Official Development Plan. Instead, initiate a proper, transparent, open public discussion on the objectives of the Social Housing Initiative, and work with communities to find better solutions than what are proposed here.

Sincerely,

Co-Chairs Larry Bengé & Dorothy Barkley
CVN Steering Committee, Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods

Network Groups of the Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods

Arbutus Ridge Community Association
Cedar Cottage Area Neighbours
Dunbar Residents Association
Fairview/South Granville Action Committee
Grandview Woodland Area Council
Greater Yaletown Community Association
Kitsilano-Arbutus Residents Association
Kits Point Residents Association
NW Point Grey Home Owners Association
Oakridge Langara Area Residents

Residents Association Mount Pleasant
Riley Park/South Cambie Advisory Group
Shaughnessy Heights Property Owners Assoc.
Strathcona Residents Association
Upper Kitsilano Residents Association
West End Neighbours Society
West Kitsilano Residents Association
West Point Grey Residents Association
West Southland Residents Association