

Recognizing Women's Right to Adequate Housing

The City of Vancouver must make adequate housing available for all women and girls. Guaranteeing adequate housing requires attention to seven key factors: security of tenure; availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure; affordability; habitability; accessibility; location; and, cultural adequacy (CESCR, 1991). Meeting these conditions has complex social, economic, and environmental implications, yet failure to respond adequately not only compromises basic human rights, but is economically costly and inefficient.

Key Concerns: Federal and provincial governments are withdrawing from traditional roles of ensuring housing provision. The City must take the lead and develop creative and progressive policies to provide housing solutions for women and girls

The City's Incentive: A truly livable and just city requires housing for all, with particular attention to the needs of the most marginalized and vulnerable. Public service costs—policing, health services, and temporary shelter provision—will decrease when affordable housing becomes available.

We ask candidates and parties to make a commitment to:

- **Generate a housing strategy that addresses the distinctive and diverse housing and homeless circumstances of women and girls, such as vulnerability to violence, income inequality and family responsibilities.**
- **Implement sustainable low-income housing options that focus on women and children.**
- **Request that the federal and provincial governments reinvest resources toward housing strategy development, and housing supply and maintenance, with a focus on supporting the diverse housing needs of women and girls.**

Women, Girls, and Housing: Background

Women and girls experience distinct and gendered issues around access to adequate housing. More specifically, the discrimination and disadvantage women and girls confront on a daily basis shape their housing needs and concerns. Housing policy at the municipal level must



address women's and girls' income inequality, vulnerability to gendered violence and sexual exploitation, family responsibilities, and employment opportunities. The City of Vancouver must develop housing policy that reflects women's and girls' lived experiences, and these solutions must be sustainable and family-friendly.

The idea of public housing must be reintroduced into the public debate, stressing the success that affordable public housing units in other jurisdictions have had in alleviating women and girls' housing concerns. Municipalities face jurisdictional challenges in addressing the current housing crisis across Canada. It is imperative that our municipal government compels the federal and provincial governments to work together efficiently and creatively to end the housing crisis. Their collaboration must include a reinvestment of resources toward housing strategy, supply, and maintenance that considers the needs of women and girls.

References

UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). (1991). [General Comment No. 4: The Right to Adequate Housing.](#)

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