



**Woodwards**  
100 block, W. Hastings

The Woodward's building, located in the 100 block of W. Hastings Street combines market and non-market housing, along with commercial, retail and institutional arts space, all of which were designed to be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. The building is part of a larger effort to revitalize one of Vancouver's historic neighbourhoods with the addition of up to 6,000 students and faculty, residents, shoppers, office workers.

There will be a total of 200 units of non-market housing (75 units of family and 125 units for singles) included in the development. The City contributed \$7,000,000 towards the cost of construction, and the Federal and Provincial governments invested \$20.5 million each. BC Housing is providing the operating subsidies required for the non-market housing.

*The Woodward's development includes:*

- 200 non-market housing units - 125 for singles at risk of homelessness
- 500+ market condo units
- 9 universally accessible units
- a daycare facility
- a sustainable environment with green spaces on rooftops and is Silver LEED certified
- SFU School of Contemporary Arts
- London Drugs/Nester's/Woodward's food floor and non-profit and federal office space.

For more information visit our website at [vancouver.ca/housing](http://vancouver.ca/housing)

The City of Vancouver has been helping Vancouver residents find affordable, suitable housing for more than 50 years.

# Innovative Housing

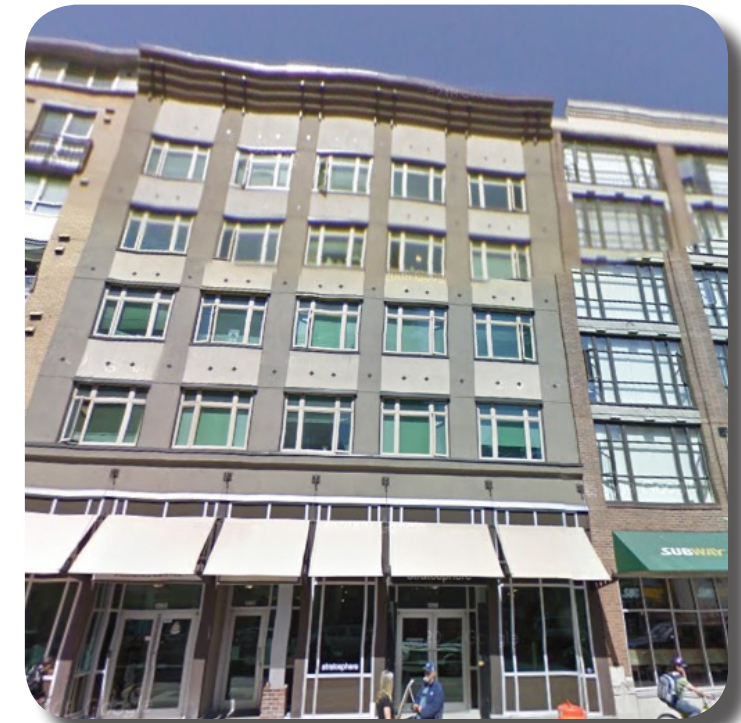
Housing Initiatives from the City of Vancouver

*The City of Vancouver's goal is to increase the supply of affordable housing in Vancouver with a broad range of dwelling types to meet the needs of a diverse population. This fact sheet highlights some innovative housing projects in Vancouver, and is one of five that outline our role in housing.*

## The City's Role

Although housing and social services are primarily the responsibility of the provincial and federal governments, the City plays an important role in the delivery of affordable and social housing. The City contributes in four main ways:

- **As policy developer and regulator** - through land use planning policies and by-laws such as the:
  - Zoning and Development By-law that regulates the development of land;
  - Standards of Maintenance By-Law to maintain minimum standards in low-income housing;
  - Single Room Accommodation By-law that manages the rate of change in the low-income housing stock; and
  - Affordable housing policy that requires 20 percent of units in new neighbourhoods to be designated for non-market housing.
- **As funder** - by working in partnership with the province to provide land and capital grants for the development of social housing.
- **As service provider** - by operating over 800 units of City-owned social housing and providing support through the Tenant Assistance Program.
- **As advocate** - through policy development such as the Homeless Action Plan, the Supportive Housing Strategy, and the Downtown Eastside Housing Plan.



Granville Residence 1261 Granville Street

## A Brief History of Social Housing

In 1949, the federal government amended the National Housing Act (NHA) to create partnerships with provinces to develop rental housing for those who could not afford housing in the private market. Between 1953 to 1993, almost all non-market projects were funded under four joint federal/provincial NHA housing programs: Public Housing, Non-Profit Housing, Co-op Hous-



ing; and Urban Native Housing. During this time, the federal government was the primary funder of social housing and the initiator of most affordable housing programs.

The first NHA project in Vancouver was built in 1954. Since then, almost 23,000 units of affordable housing have been constructed in the city. In 1993, the federal government withdrew funding for new social housing. In British Columbia, the primary responsibil-

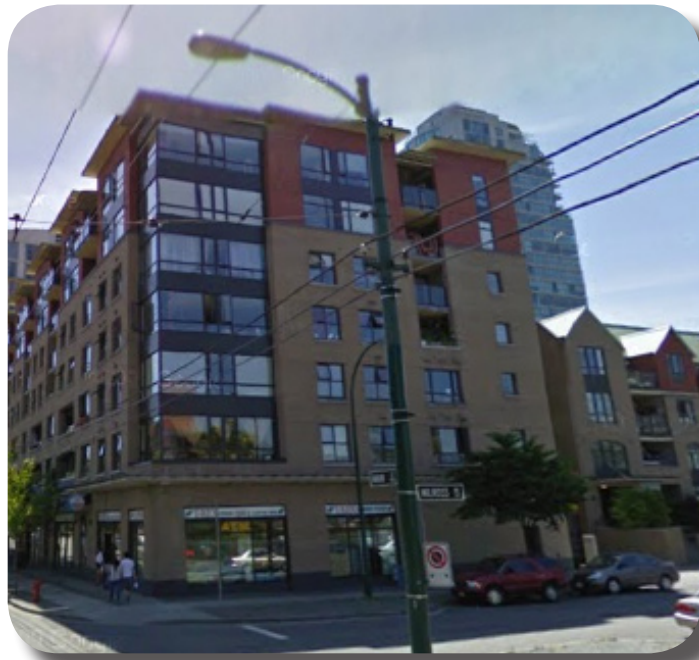
ity for providing social or non-market housing now lies with BC Housing, the agency responsible for developing and implementing housing programs.

The City continues to work in partnership with senior levels of government to create opportunities, mainly by providing land in the development of non-market housing. The demand for social housing continues to be greater than current funding.

## Innovative Housing Projects in Vancouver

The following examples of innovative housing developments illustrate the increasingly complex nature of projects, and highlights some creative partnerships between the City and senior levels of government in the delivery of affordable and social housing.

### CityGate Housing Co-operative 941 Main Street



Completed in 2002, City Gate Housing Co-operative provides 102 units for low income singles and families. This project resulted from a Council policy that has been in place since 1988 that requires 20 percent of units in new neighbourhoods to be designated for non-market housing, with a priority for core-need households.

The policy requires the developer make non-market housing sites available at a price that allows projects to be developed within the maximum budgets established by senior government non-market housing programs. At least half of the non-market housing units must be designed and developed for families.

### Mole Hill

Mole Hill is located in the heart of the West End and is framed by Thurlow, Pendrell, Bute, and Comox Streets. The project involved the restoration and conversion of 27 existing heritage homes to non-market housing. The City contributed the land and with funding from the provincial government, 170 units were renovated by 2003. Many of Mole Hill's existing long-term tenants came back to their newly modernized suites.

The 170 units available at Mole Hill range from bachelor to 3 bedrooms units. Ten units are dedicated to the wait list of the MacLaren Housing Society, which provides homes for persons living with AIDS. Watson House, located on the block, is a transition home run



by the Coast Mental Health Foundation, which provides rooms and support for eight people learning to reintegrate with the community while managing mental health issues. Finally, on the corner of Thurlow and Comox, the Dr. Peter Centre provides both in and out patient care for people living with AIDS, providing support, meals, and harm reduction services.

### Fraser Street 5616 Fraser Street (RainCity Housing)



Built in 2005, this is a 30 unit supportive housing project for drug and alcohol free transitional housing for individuals with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders.

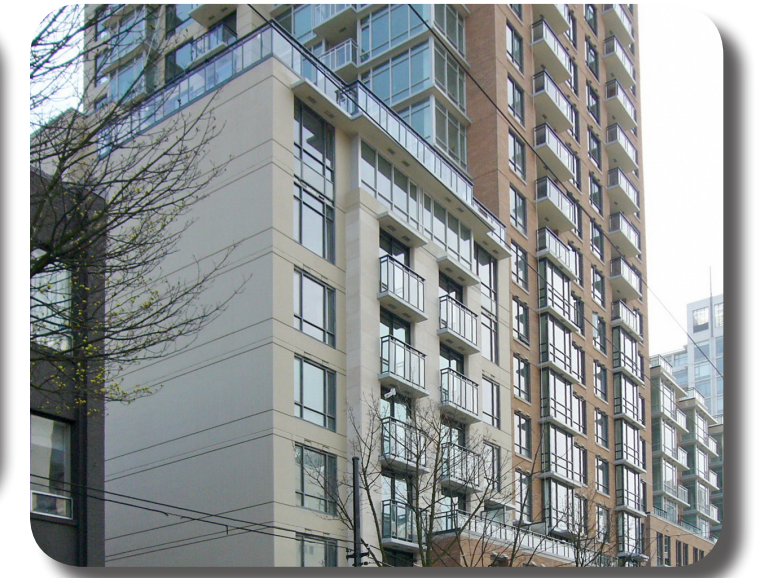
It is a new partnership, involving significant funding from the federal government's Supportive Community Initiative (SCPI) and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority (VCHA). BC Housing and the federal government provided capital funding, and the City provided a free land lease. VCHA contributes ongoing operating funds and refers potential residents.

When the project was initially proposed, there was considerable opposition from some of the neighbours. A Community Advisory Committee has been established and the project has been successfully integrated into the neighbourhood.

Like many other large urban centres, Vancouver is faced with the dual challenge of rising housing costs and increasing homelessness.

- since 1991 there has been a 50 percent increase in the number of households paying more than 50 percent of their income on housing.
- the majority of households (52 percent) rent
- the average monthly rent for a one-bedroom is \$990 (2009)
- the vacancy rate is 1.2 percent (2009)

### Doug Story Apartments 789 Richards Street



This project demonstrated how the Single Room Accommodation By-law was able to leverage opportunities for the creation of replacement low-cost housing. The SRA By-law manages the rate of change in the low income housing stock and requires Council approval for the demolition or conversion of designated rooms including Single Occupancy Hotel rooms.

Owners of the Passlin Hotel applied for an SRA Demolition Permit for all 43 designated rooms in order to redevelop this site along with adjacent land. Negotiations resulted in an agreement to bonus the new development with 99,639 sq. ft. of additional density and an investment of \$720,000 in Downtown South Development Cost Levy funds. In return, the developer built the Doug Story Apartments with 46 units of low-cost housing worth approximately \$5,765,000.

Doug Story Apartments is operated by Coast Foundation Society and provides housing for low-income singles. The building is part of a complex called L'Hermitage en Ville which includes retail shops, 204 condominiums and a 60 room luxury boutique hotel.