

The City of Vancouver has been helping Vancouver residents find affordable, suitable housing for more than 50 years. The City's role in housing has changed over time, but the commitment remains the same – to assist families and individuals who are unable to afford housing in the private market.

housing for low income singles

City of Vancouver Housing Centre

In Vancouver, like many other major cities, singles with low income have very little choice of housing. Many live in downtown hotels or rooming houses and often pay more than 50% of their income on housing. For some, having a low income is not their only problem – they may be elderly and frail, or have complicating physical, mental, and health disabilities, including alcohol or drug dependencies.

Few Housing Choices

Many low income singles live in small hotel rooms, called SROs (single room occupancies), and pay about \$325 per month. These rooms are about 100 square feet. Tenants usually share bathrooms and cooking facilities. With few exceptions,

SRO residents have very low incomes. The major market for SRO hotels are people who can't afford to pay any higher rents and, consequently, rent levels are closely related to the shelter component of social assistance.

Most hotels are in the Downtown Eastside or Downtown South, near Granville Street. The City, together with community groups, health providers and social service agencies, has worked to improve conditions in these hotels.

The City uses its Standards of Maintenance By-law and a coordinated Integrated Services Team to ensure adequate health, life-safety and physical conditions in the buildings.

Housing for Singles in Downtown

Between 1970 and 1998, over 6,000 SRO rooms were closed, converted or demolished in the Downtown Core. When not replaced, the loss of this affordable, although generally poor quality housing, is a serious concern. Much of this loss has been made up through the construction of better quality self-contained social housing. Since 1970, social housing for singles has increased to about 4,200 units. However, since 1993, with the withdrawal of federal government funding for new housing, the City has taken on an increased funding role through capital grants to projects.

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over fifty years of helping Vancouver residents through housing programs and partnerships

