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ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: May 19, 2009
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Meeting Date: June 2, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Managing Director of Social Development
SUBJECT: Social Indicators and Trends Report

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report for information.

COUNCIL POLICY

There is no applicable Council Policy.

PURPOSE

This report presents the latest Social Indicators and Trends Report, which is based on the 2006 Census and provides information on a variety of topics including population growth, housing, income, diversity, and other issues.

BACKGROUND

A Social Indicators and Trends Report (SITR) has been produced for each of the past three Censuses by the former Social Planning Department. The production of the present report was lead by the Social Policy Division of the Social Development Department in partnership with the Housing Policy Division and the Planning Department, and is based on the 2006 Census data. The 2006 report is enhanced from past reports in that it includes a broader range of topics, and has references to additional research for those interested in further information.

The report provides information on such topics as:

- Vancouver's population and population growth relative to other cities in Canada and the lower mainland;

- The number of children, youth, families, and seniors in the city; population change; areas of the city with increasing/decreasing populations of different age groups;
- Housing types and affordability;
- Labour force participation, median incomes, low income families and seniors; income polarization;
- Cultural diversity including immigrant and recent immigrant settlement patterns; mother tongues;
- Educational attainment;
- Other topics including transit use, care giving and unpaid housework.

DISCUSSION

Past Social Indicators and Trends Reports have been well used by City staff, community agencies and the public. The report provides data on the city's population which is a valuable planning tool for identifying trends, assessing service needs, and developing new programs.

This report complements the Planning Department's Community Pages (website) which provide a selection of census information on a local area basis.

The report is primarily information, not analysis. While the social development planning process initiated by past Councils is currently in abeyance, the Social Indicators and Trends Report, along with other significant reports on child care and housing as requested by Council help to provide input into the larger social development initiatives and strategy for the City. Other facets of this work include:

- The development of demographic and issue papers on seniors, immigrants, children and youth, and other population groups. In addition to demographic information, these discussion papers provide research-based information on issues affecting different populations, and a discussion of present and possible municipal roles. Subject to consultation both inside the City and with the community, these papers will assist in the formulation of City policy with respect to these groups.
- Liaison with other government and research bodies to share information and research, define gaps and develop collaborative initiatives. Current discussions include Vancouver Coastal Health, Providence Centre for Healthy Aging, and Metropolis BC.
- The development of presentations for City departments and external use.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Social Indicators and Trends Report can be used by City staff and community organizations to build understanding about population trends and issues, and to plan both for present and for future needs.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Copies of the Social Indicators and Trends Report have been distributed to Council, City Departments and community partners in the social service sector. Additional copies can be requested from the Social Policy Division. Presentations are being conducted with all City departments to assist in current and longer term planning.

CONCLUSION

The Social Indicators and Trends Report presents information from the 2006 Census, to support the City's work in planning and policy development.

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