

File No. 04-1000-20-2015-162

July 29, 2015

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1):

Re: Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")

I am writing in response to your request received on June 19, 2015 for:

Regarding the Mayor's speech on housing affordability to Urban Land Institute in Vancouver on June 17, 2015, all records regarding the drafting and writing of the speech, the names of the staff and consultants who contributed to the process, and any agreements with any consultants, including, but not limited to, contracts, invoices and payment, for work on the speech.

All responsive records are attached. Some information in the records has been severed, (blacked out), under s.13(1) of the Act. You can read or download those sections here: http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00

Under section 52 of the Act you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your request. The Act allows you 30 business days from the date you receive this notice to request a review by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, info@oipc.bc.ca or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number assigned to your request (04-1000-20-2015-162); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request for information sent to the City of Vancouver; and 4) detailed reasons or grounds on which you are seeking the review.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Freedom of Information Office at foi@vancouver.ca if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

Cobi Falconer, FOI Case Manager to
Barbara VanFraassen



Barbara J. Van Fraassen, BA
Director, Access to Information
City Clerk's Department, City of Vancouver
Email: Barbara.vanfraassen@vancouver.ca
Telephone: 604.873.7999

Encl.

:cf

Bertrand, Dana

From: Caley, Braeden
Sent: Thursday, July 02, 2015 4:54 PM
To: Bertrand, Dana
Subject: FW: ULI speech - pdf
Attachments: 2015_06_17_ULI speech.pdf

From: Quinlan, Kevin
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2015 11:43 AM
To: Caley, Braeden; Henry, Molly
Cc: Quinlan, Kevin
Subject: ULI speech - pdf

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**Mayor Gregor Robertson
to the Urban Land Institute
June 17, 2015
Vancouver, BC
Check against delivery**

It's a pleasure to join you again. Thank you to Jennifer for that warm welcome

I'd like to first start by recognizing members of City Council and our City staff team here today....

And most of all, thank you to the Urban Land Institute for the invitation to speak with you today

The issues that ULI raises are so important during a time when our city and region are facing some big challenges, and some exciting opportunities. And there's no shortage of either of them in Vancouver

First, the opportunities:

Our city is in a position of strength at a time when other governments are stuck in gridlock or uncertainty

Our economy is projected to be the strongest in Canada next year. The Conference Board of Canada says we're bucking the national trend. We're seeing record levels of new office space being built downtown, and securing long-term leases that represent a vote of confidence in the health of our city.

3 of Canada's top tech start-ups potentially valued at \$1 billion or more are in Vancouver: hootsuite, slack, and vision critical

We're leading on the environment as the world turns to Paris and COP21 this December. Climate pollution is dropping in Vancouver, we've set the bold goal of shifting to 100% renewable energy, and now 50% of all trips in Vancouver are done by bike, on foot or by transit - 5 years ahead of schedule

We're embracing the potential for visionary changes to our city, with a decision on the viaducts coming this fall, which could potentially open up public land to connect Chinatown with False Creek

And we're doubling down on a culture of vibrancy, investing in festivals and culture, injecting energy into our street life and showcasing our diversity in neighbourhoods throughout Vancouver

These are opportunities that other cities can only dream of – and not a day goes by I don't recognize how fortunate I am to serve the people of Vancouver at a time like this

But we have our challenges, for sure

Like transportation, where we'll soon hear the results of a plebiscite that I hope will unlock our region's transit future, or could set us backwards. And I want to be clear that one way or another, a Broadway Subway WILL get built - and I want to recognize ULI's leadership in bringing your expertise and insight towards the Broadway Corridor, and making a clear, coherent case for why a Subway makes sense

We've made progress toward our goal of ending street homelessness – we're not there yet, but we're determined as ever to keep helping our most vulnerable

but there's another big challenge for our city, one that cuts to the heart of the kind of community we want to be. And it's the issue I want to talk about today: affordability.

If you look only at the aggregate numbers, our real estate situation is great. Plenty of shovels in the ground, plenty of jobs in construction, the value of people's homes steadily increasing... it all looks rosy.

But you don't have to look too closely to see the cracks — and the biggest one is affordability.

Back when I was a young North Vancouver boy, Kitsilano was still a working-class Greek neighbourhood.

Good luck finding a home in Kits that a working-class family could afford today.

That's the shadow side of our long real estate boom. We're pricing too many people out of living in our city, and creating a generational divide we cannot allow to continue

And when home ownership is the way that the middle class has of building wealth and financial security, I don't have to tell you what that means for income inequality.

Now, this didn't just happen overnight. Affordability in Vancouver has been a challenge for a long time.

And it's easy to mistake a long-standing problem for an intractable one. To say this is just the market at work, for better and for worse.

Well, I don't buy that.

After all, we shape the market forces at work in our cities in countless direct and indirect ways. At City Hall, with zoning, with neighbourhood planning, with our infrastructure choices, and at the senior levels of government, with our spending priorities and allocations, our tax incentives and regulations

A city where only the well-off can afford to live is not the Vancouver we want to build.

So I reject the idea that our lack of affordability is some gravitational constant of the marketplace. It may be a complex, pressing public policy issue, but we're not powerless.

and together, we're taking some bold steps to address it.

If there is one message I want to convey, it is this: City Hall is doing everything we can to get the housing built that meets the needs of our residents – and we will keep pursuing every option or idea to do so.

Put yourself in the shoes of a young professional, a few years out of university, currently renting in a basement suite; but hoping to move closer to downtown. And while she's not expecting an ocean view, she'd love to find a decent place to rent that wasn't built before the second world war.

We're meeting that need. Our Rental 100 program has delivered almost 4,000 new units of rental homes: on Broadway, Cambie, Main Street, on Granville. More than half of all new rental being built in Metro Vancouver is taking place right here, in Vancouver. And at a time when our vacancy rate is just 0.5%, it's absolutely necessary.

Or think about a young family a few years further along. They have two kids, expecting a third, and they need to move out of their condo tower into a bigger house, maybe in a neighbourhood like Douglas Park or Cedar Cottage.

But the amount of money they'd have to come up with to make the leap to a single-family house is a non-starter. And they start to wonder if they have to move to the suburbs or further.

We're meeting that need: we're upping our requirements for family housing, requiring more 3 bedrooms in rezonings, and exploring a Family Housing Rezoning Policy that would deliver more townhouses and duplexes near parks and schools, in single family areas.

We have staff looking at a pilot program for entry-level home ownership, where the City helps drive affordability for first-time buyers who live and work in Vancouver, making below a certain income.

And our new neighbourhood plans for places like Cambie Corridor and Marpole are shifting new development towards townhouses and duplexes. Ground-oriented housing for people who want to move out of their single family home but don't want the tower.

All of these scenarios reflect the ways our housing market challenges different people, people of all ages and incomes, and yet they are linked. Which is why it is important to recognize that it is a mistake to pit one against the other.

There's nothing entitled about wanting to stay in the city you grew up in, no matter how old or how much money you have.

I've only touched on some of the initiatives we've launched. There are many others — from leveraging city land through our Affordable Housing Agency to spur affordable housing developments, to the rent bank that's helping to keep people from losing their homes when they're in danger of missing a payment.

But there is only so much that Vancouver can do on its own. Partnerships are crucial at all levels of government. And supply alone will not solve our affordability challenges.

Now, I know that no big-city mayor has ever uttered the words "The province is giving us everything we need and more."

And I'm not going to be the first. Far from it.

But I want to signal that while we've had a very productive relationship with the provincial government, our housing market has changed – and we need a new conversation that explores the next set of tools to create a fairer, more level playing field in the housing market. One that treats housing as first and foremost for homes, not as an investment commodity.

Let's look at tools to discourage speculation on housing, particularly in pre-sales, which impact first-time buyers.

We're seeing strong rises in land values year over year. When someone sells at the top end of the market, having them pay a bit more in property transfer tax is a fair way to generate funds that could help those who are struggling.

I was pleased to see the Premier say she recognizes the problem of affordability in Metro Vancouver, and that her government is studying options. Baby boomers and many people in my generation had the good fortune to enter the housing market at the beginning of a long, steady climb in housing prices.

All governments now have a responsibility to ensure that the next generation can share in the benefits of our successful economy, and have the opportunity to live and thrive right here in B.C.

The biggest gap we face, though, is with the federal government.

Over the past several years, we've seen Ottawa stepping back further and further from its responsibilities as a partner in housing.

Nation-wide, we've lost 850,000 affordable units in the last decade alone. That's akin to a major city disappearing.

In Vancouver, we're seeing Mr. Harper's government liquidating their holdings in the Jericho lands and the RCMP lands - some of the most desirable real estate in the country.

I think it's short-sighted to take these out of public hands.

Let's not turn these public assets into an enclave for the wealthy. As Mayor, I'm committed to fighting for a mix of housing, with high standards for affordability and for family-friendly homes. Let's raise the bar once more.

This is public land; surely there should be a stronger requirement for public benefit.

As the chair of the big-city mayors' caucus, I've joined my counterparts from across the country to call on Prime Minister Harper to come back to the table – and for the other parties to commit to doing so

This is a national issue. Everything I said about the importance of housing to Vancouver's economy holds true for the nation.

And in an election year, we'll be holding every party and every leader to account, because our cities can't withstand another four years of neglect. The path to a majority government in October runs through our cities.

And so far, I've been pleased that both the NDP's Tom Mulcair and the Liberal's Justin Trudeau have said they intend to run on bold urban agendas – with housing and transit front and centre

And I'm asking all of you today that if you care about your city, if you share the belief that our housing situation requires action from all levels of government, then you need to speak up as we head in to this election

Because the cost of housing isn't a force of nature. It's the result of choices that are made at city halls, in provincial legislatures and on Parliament Hill. It's the result of business decisions and government decisions.

And the choice of whether to act, whether to change those decisions, is in our hands.

Make no mistake, that requires some courage. In Vancouver, when it comes to housing, all of the easy decisions have been made.

Acknowledging that unaffordable housing isn't inevitable, that we can make Vancouver more affordable if we so choose — that means taking responsibility. All of us.

But let's take that responsibility. Because that's the hallmark of a mature, successful city — a city that aspires to global leadership: that we take on big challenges, big ideas and big responsibilities.

And there is no bigger challenge or responsibility that we face in our city than affordable housing

Thank you for the invitation to speak with you today, and I look forward to your questions

Quinlan, Kevin

From: Rob Cottingham <rob@socialsignal.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2015 5:26 PM
To: Quinlan, Kevin; Magee, Michael
Subject: Re: Info for speech
Attachments: 2015.06.03.housing.docx

Hi, Kevin and Michael —

I'm attaching my first draft for the Urban Land Institute speech on June 17. I think this covers the points we discussed and then some; it's about 250 words longer than I'd like, but I've thrown in a kitchen sink or two so you can have some options when you give me direction for pruning in the follow-up draft.

Happy to talk at your convenience!

Cheers,
--rob

On Thu, May 28, 2015 at 5:02 PM, Quinlan, Kevin <Kevin.Quinlan@vancouver.ca> wrote:

Hi Rob, here are some key things we'll want covered. Wide variety of content to choose from. Key messages to weave in to the personal stories:

We're taking action on family housing to make sure young people have a future here

We're being creative and our programs are working

We're doing as much as we can but we don't have feds/prov, and it is creating challenges

Overall stats on housing: <http://former.vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20150526/documents/rr1apresentation.pdf>

VAHA – affordable housing agency

<http://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/city-purchases-land-for-over-120-units-of-affordable-housing.aspx>

Getting rental housing built

<http://vancouver.ca/news-calendar/2014-housing-report-card-tracks-progress-of-vancouver-housing-strategy.aspx>

Family Housing

The City is doing an unprecedented push on family housing. We've enabled new 3 bedroom units, and our new family housing policy will make it easier to increase family homes near parks, schools, community centres

Stats

- news release sent over on 3 bedrooms

<http://former.vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20150526/documents/rr1bpresentation.pdf>

Fed cutbacks

Years of federal cutbacks are compounding our affordability challenges. The City has XXXX units of low-income housing that is at threat from fed cutbacks and expiring leases

Some stats:

1. As a percentage of GDP, the Government of Canada spends 40% less on affordable housing programs than it did in 1989.
1. 850,000 affordable units have been lost in the last decade (units available for less than \$800/month).
2. One in every 3 renters spend more than 30% and 1 in 5 renters spend over 50% of income on rent.
3. Only 11 per cent of housing starts since 1996 have been rental units.

1. Approximately 450,000 social housing units will lose federal operating subsidies in the next 20 years.
2. As many as 30,000 homes that receive only federal assistance will be lost completely.
3. Federal investment in social housing is in a rapid decline. By 2020, the Government of Canada will have reduced its spending on social housing by \$364 million annually.
4. Canada's social housing stock is aging. It is estimated that \$1.35 billion in operations and repair is needed this year to ensure that existing units remain habitable.

Need for Prov/feds

The City is maxing out its supply and regulatory tools to address housing. No city has done more to pay for housing, to provide land for housing, to partner on housing. In the face of skyrocketing prices, the logical conclusion is the need for prov or fed tools to mitigate negative impacts

- reference comments on spec tax

Public lands

I believe that public land should remain in public control. That's why our VAHA is leasing city sites, and not selling. So while I disagree with the federal government dispensing of public assets like the Jericho Lands, I want to see the best possible outcome -- and that means setting a higher bar for affordability on public lands

Some background: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/home-and-garden/real-estate/in-vancouver-debate-swirls-over-jericho-lands/article24479808/>

Stats on Van housing market

Average price for detached home in Greater Vancouver hit \$1.4 m – a record

Number of sales last month up 27% over 10 year average

Housing price index hit \$2.5m on westside – record; \$1.05m on eastside – record

Sales to listing ratio of 32.8% - 20% is considered a “sellers” market

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/economy/housing/greater-vancouvers-housing-market-is-on-the-rise/article23779502/>

Average property in Metro now requires more than 48% of median household income to buy

% of income required to maintain a home in Vancouver is 76%, up from 42% in 2002

<http://www.vancouversun.com/business/Average+Vancouver+house+prices+million+foreseen+Vancity+report/10917802/story.html#ixzz3a3JsGqdc>

World's biggest asset manager says Vancouver best to invest in Vancouver apartments/condos

<http://business.financialpost.com/personal-finance/mortgages-real-estate/forget-gold-buy-a-vancouver-condo-if-you-want-to-hoard-your-wealth-says-worlds-biggest-money-manager>

The latest CMHC condo owners survey, which covers Toronto and Vancouver, shows an increase in the number of owners who have an investment property planning to sell within 2 years (12%) and 2-5 years (18%). More than half of these units were purchased as pre-sales.

<http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/odpub/pdf/68330.pdf?fr=1432748895654>

Sales of apartment properties in Metro Van are up 50.1% from April 2013

Sales of attached properties in Metro Van are up 53.6% from April 2013

Sales of detached properties in Metro Van are up 70.6% from April 2013

<http://www.rebgv.org/monthly-reports?month=April&year=2015>

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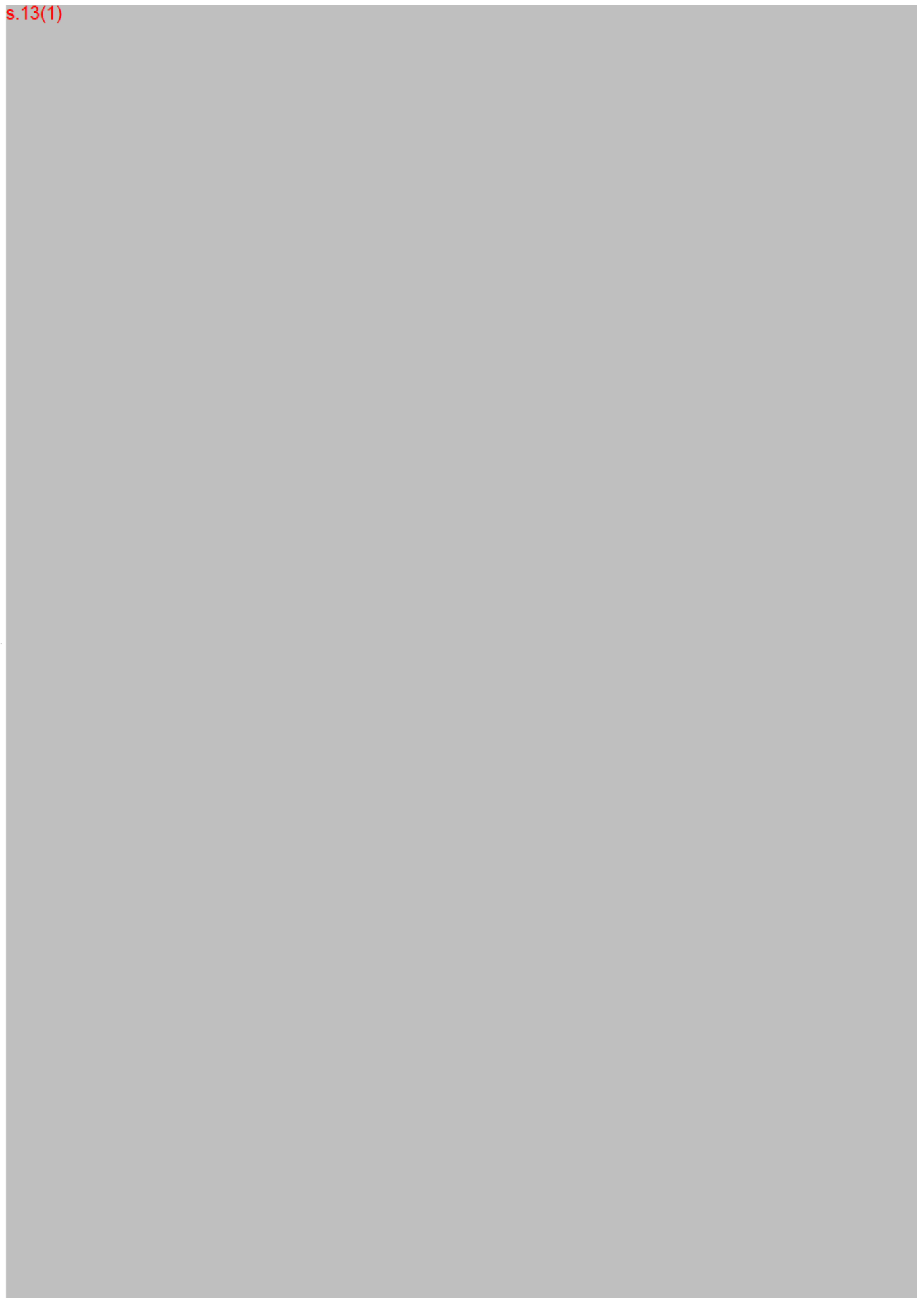
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