

From: **"Mochrie, Paul"**

To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**

Date: 2024-04-02 9:03:17 AM

Subject: Upcoming Media Statement: SRO Vacancy Control Decision (April 02, 2024)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below media statement today after the City's Legal department filed our application for leave for appeal at the Supreme Court of Canada as it relates to SRO vacancy control on April 1. Please keep this news release embargoed until it goes live from the City media email account.

Best,
Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

April 02, 2024

Media Statement

City of Vancouver

City of Vancouver Seeks Supreme Court of Canada Appeal on SRO Vacancy Control Decision

Yesterday, the City of Vancouver filed an application to the Supreme Court of Canada seeking permission to appeal a recent judgment of the BC Court of Appeal that strikes down the City's vacancy control bylaws. The Supreme Court will now have to decide whether it intends to hear the appeal.

Background

The City's 6,500 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) rooms have historically provided a housing of last resort before homelessness for the City's very low-income residents, but many privately-owned SROs are becoming increasingly unaffordable to those on income assistance.

In 2021, the Council adopted an SRO vacancy control policy and enacted the necessary amendments to the License By-Law to regulate rents between tenancies, which is not currently regulated by the Province or other levels of government.

The regulations aim to slow speculative investment and rapidly rising rents in SRO buildings and prevent tenant displacement.

The amendments to the License By-law that authorized Vacancy Control were struck down by the BC Supreme Court on August 3, 2022. The BC Court of Appeal upheld that decision on February 2, 2024.

The City, in partnership with senior levels of government, remains committed to replacing SROs with self-contained, housing that is secure and affordable to low-income residents. Since the Vancouver Housing Strategy was approved in 2017, there has been a growing need for low-income housing, which means we continue to rely on SRO stock as housing despite its inherent challenges. As such, seeking to appeal the court decision related to SRO vacancy control is an important action to support housing affordability in the City.

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