

From: "Singh, Sandra" <Sandra.Singh@vancouver.ca>

To: "[Direct to Mayor and Council - DL](#)"

Date: 9/16/2025 11:00:42 AM

Subject: Memo to Mayor & Council - Major sporting events and public realm management

Attachments: CMO - DCM - Memo (Council) - Major sporting events and public realm management (2025-09-16).pdf

Good morning Mayor and Council,

In response to some discussions in the public and media asserting that the City conducted "street sweeps" during the 2010 Olympics and expressing concerns about FIFA World Cup 26 Vancouver™ plans, the attached memo provides information on the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games and plans related to FIFA World Cup 26 Vancouver™. Key information includes:

- The City did not displace or relocate people experiencing or at risk of homelessness during the 2010 Winter Games,
- The City's FIFA World Cup 26 Vancouver™ Host Committee is dedicated to planning and delivering the event in alignment with all relevant policy and legal protections for people experiencing, or at risk of homelessness.
- The City does not engage in "street sweeps" which implies people are required to move along.
 - The City is committed to maintaining a safe, clean and accessible public realm for all residents.
 - Through the Integrated Response Team, staff use a trauma-informed approach to work with people towards by-law compliance, including packing down tents/structures, however, people can remain in place and are not required to relocate.
- These points above are also recommended speaking points should Council be requested to speak on this matter.

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me and staff will address through the weekly Council Q&A.

Thank you,
Sandra

Sandra Singh | Deputy City Manager
City of Vancouver
E-mail: sandra.singh@vancouver.ca
Pronouns: she/her

Assistant: Laura Holvor
Phone: 604.829.9602
E-mail: laura.holvor@vancouver.ca
Pronouns: she/her

The City of Vancouver acknowledges the unceded homelands of the x m k y m (Musqueam), S wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

September 16, 2025

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy & Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Margaret Wittgens, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services
Jessie Adcock, Host Committee Lead and Chief Delivery Officer, FIFA World Cup 26 Vancouver™

FROM: Sandra Singh
Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Approach to Unsheltered Homelessness and use of "Street Sweeps" related to the 2010 Winter Games and FIFA 2026

RTS #: N/A

PURPOSE

This memo provides an update to Mayor and Council on whether there were efforts to displace or hide vulnerable residents for the purposes of hosting the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. And whether, by extension, there are similar plans in relation to DTES residents during the FIFA games as this is a recurring topic in the media.

The City did not displace or relocate people experiencing or at risk of homelessness during the 2010 Winter Games, and similarly, the City's FIFA World Cup 26 Vancouver™ Host Committee is dedicated to planning and delivering the event in alignment with all relevant policy and legal protections for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

BACKGROUND

The City's approach to homelessness is a multi-pronged strategy focusing on providing a continuum of housing and support, including emergency shelters and rapid response for those in crisis, homelessness prevention through outreach and services, and long-term affordable and supportive housing solutions. This strategy, outlined in *Housing Vancouver*, emphasizes collaboration with provincial and federal governments and community partners to increase housing supply, support housing stability, and offer personalized services to address the diverse needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The City does not engage in "street sweeps" but is committed to maintaining a safe, clean, accessible public realm through regular daily sanitation work and By-law enforcement.

2010 Olympics DTES Response

The Inner-City Inclusive (ICI) Commitment Statement ([Appendix A](#)), part of the 2010 Olympic bid, pledged that partners (Canada, BC, Vancouver and VANOC) would ensure the Games created direct benefits and minimized harm for Vancouver's inner-city communities (Mount Pleasant, Downtown South and Downtown Eastside).

ICI commitments covered civil liberties, public safety, health, social services, and housing. In 2006, an advisory Housing Table formed to address the five housing-related commitments:

- Provide an affordable housing legacy;
- Protect rental housing stock;
- Provide diverse temporary accommodation for Games' visitors/workers;
- Prevent homelessness due to the Games; and
- Avoid involuntarily displacement and rent hikes.

The Housing Table included representatives from both the private and non-profit housing sectors. VANOC, and all levels of government.

Advocacy groups like the Anti-Poverty Coalition and Pivot protested with "Homes, not games" and claimed new legislation supported street sweeps by empowering police to force unhoused sleepers into shelters in extreme weather ([Assistance to Shelter Act](#)). Homelessness existed prior to the 2010 Winter Games and continues as a persistent social issue that needs to be addressed today.

The 2010 Winter Games housing and homelessness-related actions were consistent with City policy and leveraged significant investment in housing and homelessness services at the time.

Some specific examples include:

- The purchase/lease and renovation of [24 SROs](#) by the Province, through BC Housing. The City supported an expedited permitting process to support renovations. This initiative resulted in significant renovations and secured affordability for low-income tenants.
- [MOU](#) between the City and the Province to deliver 12 social and supportive housing sites creating ~1,200 units.

- A [partnership](#) with BC Housing to increase shelter capacity during the winter to provide safe, warm spaces and connect people to services and permanent housing.

Additional [VANOC](#) actions in the realm of housing and homelessness included:

- \$30M to the City for 250 affordable housing units from Olympic Village;
- \$250K for 32 youth shelter beds at Covenant House;
- \$200K for a temporary hostel with 300+ beds to ensure Games visitors did not impact availability of low-income and social housing; and
- Ensured no low-income housing was used for Olympic Family or partner accommodation.

DTES Social Sustainability initiatives included:

Economic and low-barrier employment opportunities:

- \$5.7M in VANOC spending with inner-city businesses/social enterprises
- 220 individuals trained in trades and services
- 500 training and employment opportunities and \$42.5M in procurement opportunities for inner-city residents and businesses
- [Refundable Beverage Container Recycling Initiative](#) for people with employment barriers
- [Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Street Banner Allocation Program](#) - revenue received from the sale or reuse of the Olympic banners dedicated to inner-city projects

Recreational opportunities for DTES residents:

- 24,000 games tickets distributed to inner-city residents via 65+ organizations
- Home Ground Festival in Oppenheimer Park for DTES residents:
 - 3-day tented event ~ 1500 sit-down meals and continuous activities, entertainment, and cultural programming
 - Enhanced programming at Oppenheimer Park during the Olympic period
 - 4 months of lead-up events: Street Soccer tournament, neighbourhood house workshops, storytelling, meals, and performances

Plans Related to DTES and homelessness response for FWC26

The City of Vancouver is committed to protecting and upholding human rights including preventing the displacement or relocation of those experiencing or at risk of homelessness in the course of preparing and hosting the FIFA World Cup 26™ .

This includes minimizing disruptions to residents' access to shelters and services, particularly in Downtown, Chinatown, and the Downtown Eastside, as well as supporting tenants' rights and all protections provided by the Residential Tenancy Act and both the City and Provincial short-term rental regulations. Additionally, tenants living in SROs are protected by the City's Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-Law, which secures the housing as long-term rental accommodation.

As per regular operational services, the City does not engage in “street sweeps” but is committed to maintaining a safe, clean, accessible public realm through regular daily sanitation work and By-law enforcement.

As a FWC26 Host City, the City of Vancouver is obligated to develop a Host City Human Rights Action Plan to address potential human rights impacts associated with staging the event. This work encompasses the safeguarding, inclusion and protection of vulnerable populations. Staff are planning to conduct engagement later this fall with Downtown Eastside organizations as part of this work. Council will be briefed on this Action Plan in Q4-2025.

NEXT STEPS

Please note the following dates are pending confirmation:

- September 2025: Raise awareness of Human Rights planning with key agencies and community organizations (e.g. downtown service organizations and Council advisory committees)
- Q4- 2025: Brief Council on the FWC26 Human Rights Action Plan
- Q4-2025: Submit Host City Human Rights Action Plan to FIFA
- Q4-2025 / Q1-2026: Host City Human Rights Action Plan published publicly (timing depends on FIFA)
- Spring 2026: Staff will continue to engage key stakeholders on the implementation of the Plan

FINAL REMARKS

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me directly at sandra.singh@vancouver.ca and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.



Sandra Singh
Deputy City Manager

604.871-6858 | sandra.singh@vancouver.ca