



STRATEGY 1:  
**The City of Vancouver to provide land  
for 1200 supportive housing units.**

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STRATEGY 2:  
**Ensure local homeless are housed  
locally.**

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WORKING TO END STREET HOMELESSNESS  
BY 2015 AND INCREASE HOUSING FOR  
LOW AND MODEST INCOME HOUSEHOLDS.

## EXPLORING STRATEGIES



### IN FOCUS

#### **This is my story: Brutus**

When he was young, Brutus and his brother were placed in a children's shelter. He doesn't remember ever having a home.

For the past five years, Brutus has spent most nights on his mattress in the alley. A plastic sheet keeps the rain away. For spending money, he collects cans. "I don't like crackheads and I don't want to live in a hotel where everyone drinks all the time. I want to live in something that's better than skid row. I'm fifty-one years old and I don't want to die out here."



Almost half the  
homeless have lived  
in Vancouver for more  
than 10 years.



### CHALLENGES & PROGRESS

The 2011 homeless count found 1,605 homeless people in Vancouver; 6% fewer than in 2010. The number of homeless people is made up of those sleeping on the streets and those in shelters. This is the first time we have seen a decrease in the number of homeless since surveys began in 2002. Over 90% of the 2011 homeless were found in shelters compared to 75% the previous year. This year, 145 people were found sleeping on our streets compared to 420 last year. The City will continue to make the elimination of street homelessness by 2015 a priority, as it is corrosive to the health and well-being of people who are homeless and to the overall health and economy of our city.



## SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS:

- Housing for people who need mental health support
- Housing for people in recovery from addiction
- Low-barrier housing, for people coming directly from the street
- Housing that links tenants with services



## BENEFITS OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

- Reduces symptoms of mental illness
- Increases residential stability
- Empowers citizens
- Reduces the use of emergency services and centres
- Creates substantial cost savings



## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

The homeless count gives us a good idea of how many people live on our streets and the common challenges they face like mental and addiction issues, health and disability issues and a history of government care (e.g. foster care).

The count shows us that the homeless live all across our city and that almost half have lived in Vancouver for more than 10 years. They have made connections, found their own support networks in our communities and have developed a strong sense of place.

Many are looking for shelter that can accommodate their pets, their shopping carts and their particular life issues. Ultimately they are seeking a home where they are welcome and which provides for their emotional, mental and physical needs.

The City has a number of supportive housing sites around the city that it will work on with its partners and will look for more sites in the future.



## PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Homelessness is a complex issue. No one agency or government can deliver all the solutions needed; partnerships are critical. In recent years, the City has provided free land and capital grants for supportive housing. Construction is primarily funded by the federal and provincial governments, through agencies such as BC Housing. Private foundations like Streethome are playing a larger role. Non-profit societies often contribute land, cash and expertise in operating buildings. The City has a number of supportive housing sites around the city that it is working on with its partners. The City will look for more sites in the future that reflect the diversity of need in neighbourhoods across the city.

Partnerships are essential in meeting our goal to end street homelessness

