

## FW: Caller - Jean Swanson

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From: Rayner, Jena MAH:EX <Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca>  
To: Minister, MAH MAH:EX <MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca>  
Sent: November 19, 2019 at 1:18:18 PM Pacific Standard Time  
Min sig

### Jena Rayner

Administrative Assistant to the  
Honourable Selina Robinson  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Room 310, Parliament Buildings  
Office: 250-387-2283

---

**From:** Kubisheski, Carlee MAH:EX <Carlee.Kubisheski@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** November 18, 2019 12:41 PM  
**To:** White, Christine MAH:EX <Christine.White@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Rayner, Jena MAH:EX <Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca>; Hitchen, Daniel MAH:EX <Daniel.Hitchen@gov.bc.ca>; Gedney, Vanessa R MAH:EX <Vanessa.Gedney@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Caller - Jean Swanson

Caller details below:

s.13

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**Name:** City Councillor in Vancouver. Jean Swanson.

**Phone number:** 604-729-2380

### Caller Summary:

Jean would like to discuss a way to tie rent control to the unit and not the tenant. In the DTES there is a lot of single room with low rent and poor people live in them. They are terrible accommodation but better than the street. 4 buildings are for sale. The rent is approx. \$450 a month but if they are sold the new owner will get rid of the old low rent and probably double the rent.

Jean says this has happened already in the DTES and Kaye would know about this from her previous job at the city.

Jean says "we are in desperate need for this to happening now. If the sales go through we will have over 180 more homeless people"

*Can someone please give Jean a call back?*

**Carlee Kubisheski** | Acting Senior Executive Assistant  
To Deputy Minister, Kaye Krishna  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
778-698-1828



January 15, 2020

Ref: 250970

Jean Swanson, Councillor  
City of Vancouver  
453 West 12th Ave  
Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

Dear Jean Swanson:

Thank you for your telephone call to my office regarding rent controls and your concerns about homelessness in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. I apologize for the delay in responding.

The Government of British Columbia shares your concerns about the potential loss of single room occupancy (SRO) buildings, and the effects this could have on low-income renters. The Province recognizes that SROs form a critical part of British Columbia's low-income housing stock, and that, for many people, SROs are considered a last resort before homelessness.

The Province has supported people living in SRO housing by purchasing and renovating buildings and tendering long-term contracts with non-profit operators. We have also worked to help people experiencing homelessness by building new supportive housing, and through cross-ministry work at the Office of Homelessness Coordination. In just over two years, government has built over 2,000 supportive housing units, providing safe, secure housing and supports for people experiencing homelessness across the province. In Vancouver alone, we have opened more than 720 supportive homes in the last two years, with more under construction, while also investing in thousands of affordable rental homes for a wide range of incomes, including a significant number of shelter-rate units.

You will also likely be aware that the Residential Tenancy Branch has issued a new policy guideline (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/housing-and-tenancy/residential-tenancies/policy-guidelines/gl2b.pdf>) on ending a tenancy to demolish, renovate, or convert a rental unit to a permitted use, which would apply to all landlords who operate market housing. This guideline states that landlords must have all the necessary permits and approvals required by law before issuing a notice to end tenancy for demolition, renovation, or conversion. It also clarifies the tenant's right of first refusal, as well as the significant penalties for landlords who carry out bad faith evictions.

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Ministry of Municipal Affairs  
and Housing

Office of the Minister

Mailing Address:  
PO Box 9056 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E2  
Phone: 250 387-2283  
Fax: 250 387-4312

Location:  
Room 310  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

<http://www.gov.bc.ca/mah>

I also appreciate your suggestion about rent control being tied to the unit, not the renter. As you are aware, the Rental Housing Task Force heard from many renters and renter advocates during their province-wide consultation sessions in 2018 who expressed similar concerns. Ultimately, the Task Force determined that rent control tied to the unit would have the unintended consequence of reducing affordable rental stock or reducing investment in needed repairs. Government accepted the Task Force recommendation to maintain rent tied to the renter, not the unit, while lowering the annual allowable rent increase.

The Province understands the need to protect renters, especially those who are the most vulnerable in our society. That is why government has taken significant actions to protect renters, including limiting the annual allowable rent increase to the rate of inflation, closing the fixed-term lease loophole, increasing fines for bad-faith evictions, and increasing enforcement of tenancy laws.

The Province has also taken action to provide additional housing supports to British Columbians at risk of or experiencing homelessness. In fall 2017, government launched the successful Rapid Response to Homelessness Program (<https://www.bchousing.org/projects-partners/Building-BC/RRH-program>) by investing \$291 million to build over 2,000 modular supportive housing units across the province that offer a variety of health-related care and counselling services to assist those with such needs. Building on the success of this program, our Homes for BC plan includes funding for an additional 2,700 units of supportive housing, for a total of 4,700 homes with supports over 10 years. More than 2,000 of these homes are open today, providing a safe and supportive environment for people previously experiencing homelessness, with an additional 800 currently underway.

I appreciate hearing your perspective on these issues, and I will ensure that your concerns are considered as government continues its work to address homelessness and housing affordability.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Selina Robinson  
Minister

## FW: Rent Control letter to Jean Swanson

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**From:** Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>  
**To:** Duncan, Michael OHCS:EX <Michael.Duncan@gov.bc.ca>, Petrescu, Sarah OHCS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** January 21, 2020 at 11:37:54 AM Pacific Standard Time  
**Attachments:** 250970 Swanson Signed Final.pdf, FW: Caller - Jean Swanson  
I believe we helped draft sections of this letter, but it was interesting to hear<sup>s.13</sup>

s.13

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**From:** Blewett, Tyann M OHCS:EX <Tyann.Blewett@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** January 21, 2020 11:25 AM  
**To:** Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Sparrow, Brad OHCS:EX <Brad.Sparrow@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Rent Control letter to Jean Swanson

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**From:** Van Wensem, Casey OHCS:EX <Casey.VanWensem@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** January 21, 2020 11:25 AM  
**To:** Blewett, Tyann M OHCS:EX <Tyann.Blewett@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Rent Control letter to Jean Swanson

See attached.

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**From:** Van Wensem, Casey OHCS:EX  
**Sent:** January 21, 2020 11:00 AM  
**To:** Sparrow, Brad OHCS:EX <Brad.Sparrow@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: Rent Control letter to Jean Swanson

Letter and incoming attached.

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**From:** Sparrow, Brad OHCS:EX <Brad.Sparrow@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** January 21, 2020 10:35 AM  
**To:** Van Wensem, Casey OHCS:EX <Casey.VanWensem@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Rent Control letter to Jean Swanson

Hey, do you know about this letter?

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**From:** Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** January 21, 2020 10:34 AM  
**To:** Blewett, Tyann M OHCS:EX <Tyann.Blewett@gov.bc.ca>; Sparrow, Brad OHCS:EX <Brad.Sparrow@gov.bc.ca>; Preece, Spencer OHCS:EX <Spencer.Preece@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Petrescu, Sarah OHCS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>; Duncan, Michael OHCS:EX <Michael.Duncan@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Rent Control letter to Jean Swanson

Hi Tyann, Brad and Spencer,  
Would you be able to send me the letter that was sent from MSR to Jean Swanson re: vacancy control in SROs in Vancouver? It came up this morning in a call with CoV staff.  
Thanks so much,  
Hannah

**Hannah Rabinovitch**  
Director, Housing Policy Branch  
Office of Housing and Construction Standards  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Ph: (250) 883-7457

*Offering respect and acknowledgment of the Lekwungen Peoples, traditional stewards of the lands on which I live, work and play.*



January 15, 2020

Ref: 250970

Jean Swanson, Councillor  
City of Vancouver  
453 West 12th Ave  
Vancouver BC V5Y 1V4

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The Government of British Columbia shares your concerns about the potential loss of single room occupancy (SRO) buildings, and the effects this could have on low-income renters. The Province recognizes that SROs form a critical part of British Columbia's low-income housing stock, and that, for many people, SROs are considered a last resort before homelessness.

The Province has supported people living in SRO housing by purchasing and renovating buildings and tendering long-term contracts with non-profit operators. We have also worked to help people experiencing homelessness by building new supportive housing, and through cross-ministry work at the Office of Homelessness Coordination. In just over two years, government has built over 2,000 supportive housing units, providing safe, secure housing and supports for people experiencing homelessness across the province. In Vancouver alone, we have opened more than 720 supportive homes in the last two years, with more under construction, while also investing in thousands of affordable rental homes for a wide range of incomes, including a significant number of shelter-rate units.

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Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Selina Robinson  
Minister

## FW: Caller - Jean Swanson

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From: Rayner, Jena MAH:EX <Jena.Rayner@gov.bc.ca>  
To: Minister, MUNI MUNI:EX <MUNI.Minister@gov.bc.ca>  
Sent: November 19, 2019 at 1:18:18 PM Pacific Standard Time  
Min sig

### Jena Rayner

Administrative Assistant to the  
Honourable Selina Robinson  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Room 310, Parliament Buildings  
Office: 250-387-2283

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**From:** Kubisheski, Carlee MAH:EX  
**Sent:** November 18, 2019 12:41 PM  
**To:** White, Christine MAH:EX  
**Cc:** Rayner, Jena MAH:EX ; Hitchen, Daniel MAH:EX ; Gedney, Vanessa R MAH:EX  
**Subject:** FW: Caller - Jean Swanson

Caller details below:

s.13

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**Name:** City Councillor in Vancouver. Jean Swanson.

**Phone number:** 604-729-2380

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*Can someone please give Jean a call back?*

**Carlee Kubisheski** | Acting Senior Executive Assistant  
To Deputy Minister, Kaye Krishna  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
778-698-1828



## FW: Arno Hotel - and other converting SRO hotels

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**From:** Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>  
**To:** Petrescu, Sarah OHCS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>, Duncan, Michael OHCS:EX <Michael.Duncan@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** March 6, 2020 at 11:59:15 AM Pacific Standard Time  
**Attachments:** 20200218175845635.pdf, s.22      ydf, ATT00001.htm, ATT00002.htm

---

**From:** Fieltsch, Raymond SDPR:EX <Raymond.Fieltsch@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** March 6, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** Hope, Melanie SDPR:EX <Melanie.Hope@gov.bc.ca>; Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>; Kelly, Avery OHCS:EX <Avery.Kelly@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Arno Hotel - and other converting SRO hotels

FYI – I already forwarded to Tyann and Scott. s.13  
s.13

---

**From:** Brandt, Alissa SDPR:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** March 6, 2020 9:03 AM  
**To:** Upton, Debi L SDPR:EX <Debi.Upton@gov.bc.ca>; Fieltsch, Raymond SDPR:EX <Raymond.Fieltsch@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Milne, Karen SDPR:EX <Karen.Milne@gov.bc.ca>; Galbraith, David J SDPR:EX <David.Galbraith@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Arno Hotel - and other converting SRO hotels

Alissa

---

**From:** Wendy Pedersen <wend.pedersen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** March 6, 2020 08:11  
**To:** Allison.Dunnet@vancouver.ca; Monika City Email <monika.czyz@vancouver.ca>; Chris Puzio <Chris.Puzio@Vancouver.ca>; Koji.Miyaji@vancouver.ca; Schwebs, Saul <Saul.Schwebs@vancouver.ca>; Claire Thompson <Claire.Thompson@vancouver.ca>; Bob Moss <bob.moss@vancouver.ca>; Mauboules, Celine <celine.mauboules@vancouver.ca>; kathryn.holm@vancouver.ca; XT:HLTH Ramsay, Shayne <sramsay@bchousing.org>; OHCS RTB Compliance OHCS:EX <RTBCompliance@gov.bc.ca>; Brandt, Alissa SDPR:EX <Alissa.Brandt@gov.bc.ca>; Deputy Minister, MAH:EX <MAH.deputyminister@gov.bc.ca>; MaryClare Zak <Maryclare.zak@vancouver.ca>  
**Cc:** Didi Dufresne <ddufresne@firstunited.ca>  
**Subject:** Arno Hotel - and other converting SRO hotels

Hello City and Provincial staff - here is an update on the Arno Hotel Renovation:

s.22

s.22

More Arno updates:

- 12 out of 36 rooms empty at the Arno and being renovated for new renters. We have been unable so far to track down s.22

- Renovations are happening mostly within legal hours but are driving remaining tenants crazy and might cause tenants to leave on their own accord. Tenants cannot get their room renovated or move to a renovated room unless they accept a \$200 rent increase.

s.22

#### More hotels at risk like the Arno

The owners of these buildings are related to the Arno owner. We know that s.22 is attempting to buy the Afton Hotel, the Pacific Hotel is on Colliers and the other two are at risk of sale too.

- Pacific Hotel (30)
- Main Rooms (30)
- Afton Hotel (40)
- New Sun Ah Hotel (50)

Approximately 150 more rooms at risk.

#### Additional hotels in the process of converting:

There are other long term SROs that housed very low income tenants for decades and have recently begun a slow but steady process of transforming into higher income rentals. This process could be stopped by vacancy control on SROs:

- Vogue Hotel (90) s.22 rents to \$1500/month
- Persepolis Hotel (30) s.22 - fobbing off totally renovated top floor for 8 new renters, not sure new rents.
- Silver Avalon Hotel (90) - rents to \$600/month
- St Elmo Hotel (20) - not sure about new rents
- Keefer Cabins (15) - rents to \$950/month

Approx total: 245 rooms

s.22

Many forces are driving the speed of SRO sales, rent increases and the homeless count including

- the coming of St Paul's Hospital,
- the increase in SRO land and building values,
- constantly shrinking base of affordable rentals
- shortage of social housing for tenants at fixed incomes

Targeted vacancy control on the SROs will slow down the speculation and evictions - by removing the economic incentive that landlords have to evict their current tenants. It won't cost governments anything and save them a tonne of money.

Wendy

Page 11 of 72 to/à Page 19 of 72

Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.22

## RE: Charter change request document

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From: Kelly, Avery OHCS:EX <Avery.Kelly@gov.bc.ca>  
To: Blewett, Tyann M OHCS:EX <Tyann.Blewett@gov.bc.ca>, Hold - 210811 - Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>, Sparrow, Brad OHCS:EX <Brad.Sparrow@gov.bc.ca>  
Cc: Petrescu, Sarah OHCS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>, Duncan, Michael OHCS:EX <Michael.Duncan@gov.bc.ca>  
Sent: June 1, 2020 at 1:58:21 PM Pacific Daylight Time

I was going to set up a call with Kara Woodward to get an update on how they are responding to the laundry list of Vancouver Charter changes the city has requested. Would you like to join Hannah and I on that call Tyann?

Avery

---

**From:** Blewett, Tyann M OHCS:EX <Tyann.Blewett@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** June 1, 2020 1:46 PM  
**To:** Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>; Sparrow, Brad OHCS:EX <Brad.Sparrow@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Petrescu, Sarah OHCS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>; Duncan, Michael OHCS:EX <Michael.Duncan@gov.bc.ca>; Kelly, Avery OHCS:EX <Avery.Kelly@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: Charter change request document

Thanks for sharing – who gets to decide this?

---

**From:** Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** June 1, 2020 1:38 PM  
**To:** Sparrow, Brad OHCS:EX <Brad.Sparrow@gov.bc.ca>; Blewett, Tyann M OHCS:EX <Tyann.Blewett@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Petrescu, Sarah OHCS:EX <Sarah.Petrescu@gov.bc.ca>; Duncan, Michael OHCS:EX <Michael.Duncan@gov.bc.ca>; Kelly, Avery OHCS:EX <Avery.Kelly@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Charter change request document  
**Importance:** High

The City of Vancouver has made several requests to MAH regarding Vancouver Charter changes. Among its requests are changes to allow rent control. See extract below.<sup>s.13</sup>

s.13

these VC changes, but wanted to let you know.  
Thanks.

MAH is in early days of considering

s.13  
i

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**From:** Kelly, Avery OHCS:EX <Avery.Kelly@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** June 1, 2020 12:35 PM  
**To:** Rabinovitch, Hannah R OHCS:EX <Hannah.Rabinovitch@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Charter change request document  
**Importance:** High

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**From:** Starkl-Moser, Miriam MAH:EX <Miriam.Starklmoser@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** June 1, 2020 12:11 PM  
**To:** Kelly, Avery OHCS:EX <Avery.Kelly@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Charter change request document  
**Importance:** High

*Miriam Starkl-Moser*  
*Phone 250 387-4017*

---

**From:** Woodward, Kara M MAH:EX <Kara.Woodward@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** May 28, 2020 1:09 PM  
**To:** Hill, Jennifer MAH:EX <Jennifer.Hill@gov.bc.ca>; Starkl-Moser, Miriam MAH:EX <Miriam.Starklmoser@gov.bc.ca>; Grant, Sean MAH:EX <Sean.Grant@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** May, Zachary OHCS:EX <Zachary.May@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Charter change request document  
**Importance:** High

Hi colleagues:

Vancouver has submitted a summary of its requests and Kaye has asked that we give consideration to these. They span the areas of the ministry in terms of subject matter. Some we have seen before.

Jennifer- Please look at the renewed request for energy benchmarking (Item iii). Can you provide comment on this for response to Tara? I know we have talked about this one and its complexities.

Also items in 1 we have seen before and discussed briefly – s.13  
s.13

Miriam – let's discuss how we will respond to this in general

Sean – please look at<sup>s.13</sup> – this is an oldie.....Miriam can you see what we have on this from when they first asked s.13

Avery – copying you in case you have not seen proposal in relation to Oppenheimer – do you have an update re ministers' review of your note? I see a single solution has been offered here. Can we also discuss item vii (s.13  
s.13

Item viii s.13  
s.13

Copying Zachary.

Thanks everyone and if anyone can tell me if the ministry<sup>s.13</sup> that would be helpful. It is my understanding that<sup>s.13</sup>

Kara

---

**From:** Wilkins, Christina MAH:EX <Christina.Wilkins@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** May 28, 2020 12:44 PM  
**To:** Woodward, Kara M MAH:EX <Kara.Woodward@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Charter change request document

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Faganello, Tara MAH:EX" <Tara.Faganello@gov.bc.ca>  
**Date:** May 26, 2020 at 4:30:42 PM PDT  
**To:** "Woodward, Kara M MAH:EX" <Kara.Woodward@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** "Andrade, Ana MAH:EX" <Ana.Andrade@gov.bc.ca>, "Wilkins, Christina MAH:EX" <Christina.Wilkins@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Charter change request document

Kara, please action the following and happy to discuss when ready...off the top of my head...these all look NEW?

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**From:** Krishna, Kaye MAH:EX <Kaye.Krishna@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** May 26, 2020 4:04 PM  
**To:** Faganello, Tara MAH:EX <Tara.Faganello@gov.bc.ca>; Ashbourne, Craig MAH:EX <Craig.Ashbourne@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Charter change request document

FYI – see attached.

Tara – could you have your team review and see how this aligns with the latest list that you've worked through? I'd like to then discuss the differences and how/whether we want to collectively manage expectations around this.

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**KAYE KRISHNA**

**Deputy Minister**

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
6th Floor, 800 Johnson St | Victoria BC V8W 9N7  
Office: 250.387.9108 | Fax: 250.387.7973

---

**From:** Johnston, Sadhu <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>  
**Sent:** May 26, 2020 8:20 AM  
**To:** Krishna, Kaye MAH:EX <Kaye.Krishna@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Charter change request document

Hi Kaye

Here's our priority charter change requests. Let me know if you want to discuss.

Sadhu

**Sadhu Aufochs Johnston** | City Manager  
Office of the City Manager | City of Vancouver  
[sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca](mailto:sadhu.johnston@vancouver.ca)  
604.873.7627

Pronouns: he, him, his

## Vancouver City Councillor Jean Swanson - Written Summary of Concerns - Vacancy Control in SRO Hotels in Vancouver

---

From: Rowley, Cheryl <Cheryl.Rowley@vancouver.ca>  
To: Minister, MAH MAH:EX <MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca>  
Cc: Swanson, Jean <Jean.Swanson@vancouver.ca>  
Sent: July 30, 2020 at 4:10:23 PM Pacific Daylight Time

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.**

Hi Jena,

Thanks for your email. As you suggested, I have outlined below a written summary of Councillor Swanson's concerns:

### **Re: Vacancy control in SRO hotels in Vancouver**

**ISSUE:** I'm writing to plead with you to enact vacancy control in Vancouver's SRO hotels or to give the city the charter power to do it. The City of Vancouver has been asking for this since 2014.

**SRO's are raising rents when tenants leave, reducing the number of units for very low income people:** I have heard you talking about how wonderful the modular housing works for people who are homeless. I agree. The problem is, unless we get vacancy control in the SROs, the SROs keep being sold and gentrified and the low rents double and triple as soon as a tenant leaves, is evicted or bought out. For every SRO that this happens to, your government needs to build another modular building or, because the SRO's are the last stop before homelessness, more people become homeless. Several landlords actually have a business model of acquiring the hotels, getting rid of low rent paying tenants, and doubling or tripling the rent for new tenants. This is happening in many SRO hotels and has been well documented by the City and the Carnegie Community Action Project.

**SRO vacancy control could make it easier for the government to acquire SROs:** SRO hotels are actually advertised for sale on the basis that they are "micro-units" and that rents can easily be raised. Because of this, the value of the hotel increases. With vacancy control in SROs, this value would decrease, and it would be less expensive for the province to buy them to keep them in the public realm, improve management and prevent homelessness.

**SRO vacancy control is a cheap way for your government to prevent homelessness from increasing:** Right now the Arno, Arlington, Keefer Cabins, Vogue, Brandiz, and Persepolis, are some of the hotels that are in the process of raising rents so that people on welfare and disability won't be able to afford them. Vacancy control would also be the cheapest way your government could preserve this housing for low income folks until we get enough good social housing. Vacancy control is simply a law, and doesn't involve having to buy land, and build and operate buildings.

Your government can spend hundreds of millions on hotels and modular (which is good, keep doing it), but homelessness won't be reduced because we are losing affordability in so many SROs. This would be an easy and cheap way to stop some of the increase in homelessness that everyone in the city is experiencing, especially the folks who have no home.

**Implementing SRO vacancy control would be relatively easy:** The city actually has a list of all the SROs so it would be easy to determine which ones the vacancy control would apply to. We could simply take a picture of the rent roll every year with the business license application. If we publicize that rents can't increase in between tenants, then tenants would probably be more than happy to help enforce a vacancy control law.

**We are at our wits end about homelessness:** City councilors are being bombarded by people who are homeless, their supporters, and by Business Improvement Associations and housed people who want more policing and more housing to deal with homelessness. Homeless people have about half the life expectancy as other people, and we and they are in the middle of a pandemic and need housing more than ever. As a city we don't have the tools to deal with this. As the province, you do have the tools. Vacancy control is one of those tools that would help a lot.

Please let me know what you think of this reasoning. I would be happy to take you or someone from your staff on a tour of the gentrifying hotels to see first hand what is happening.

Take care. Jean

---

**From:** Minister, MAH MAH:EX [mailto:MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 14, 2020 12:13 PM  
**To:** Rowley, Cheryl  
**Subject:** [EXT] RE: Vancouver City Councillor Jean Swanson - Request for Telephone Meeting

**City of Vancouver security warning:** Do not click on links or open attachments unless you were expecting the email and know the content is safe.

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Hello,

On behalf of the Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, I am following up on your request for a telephone meeting the Minister to discuss SROs.

Unfortunately, the Minister's schedule is fully subscribed at this time. If you would like to submit a written summary of concerns, I will be sure that the Minister gets your letter and responds.

Thank you kindly,

**Jena Rayner**

Administrative Assistant to the  
Honourable Selina Robinson  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Room 310, Parliament Buildings  
Office: 250-387-2283

---

**From:** Rowley, Cheryl  
**Sent:** June 25, 2020 11:18 AM  
**To:** Minister, MAH MAH:EX ; Robinson.MLA, Selina LASS:EX  
**Subject:** Vancouver City Councillor Jean Swanson - Request for Telephone Meeting

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

Vancouver City Councillor Jean Swanson, would like to request a phone call with Minister Robinson, in regard to the following topic:

**SROs – Rent control on the Unit, not the tenants**

Please let me know if this is possible, and I can then adjust Councillor Swanson's schedule to whichever time is most convenient on your end.

Thanks very much,

Cheryl Rowley | Assistant to Councillors  
CITY OF VANCOUVER | City Clerk's Dept.  
E: cheryl.rowley@vancouver.ca  
P: 604.871.6714



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## FW: Letter from City of Vancouver to Attorney General David Eby

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From: Minister, AG AG:EX <AG.Minister@gov.bc.ca>  
To: Nanninga, Tanera AG:EX <Tanera.Nanninga@gov.bc.ca>, Normand, Nicole AG:EX <Nicole.Normand@gov.bc.ca>  
Cc: Milne, Gala AG:EX <Gala.Milne@gov.bc.ca>, Harder, Derrick AG:EX <Derrick.Harder@gov.bc.ca>  
Sent: February 2, 2021 at 1:45:25 PM Pacific Standard Time  
Attachments: Letter from Mayor Stewart to Attorney General David Eby Re Congratulations and City of Vancouver Priorities.pdf

Hi Tanera and Nicole,

The Mayor has a meeting request in the second to last paragraph of his correspondence.

C.

---

**From:** Stewart, Kennedy <Kennedy.Stewart@vancouver.ca>  
**Sent:** February 2, 2021 12:20 PM  
**To:** Minister, AG AG:EX <AG.Minister@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** Letter from City of Vancouver to Attorney General David Eby

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.**

Dear Attorney General Eby,  
Please find attached letter for your consideration. Thank you,

Kennedy Stewart  
Mayor, City of Vancouver



---

**MAYOR KENNEDY STEWART**

February 2, 2021

Honourable David Eby  
Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing  
PO Box 9044 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Via e-mail: [AG.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AG.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Attorney General Eby:

On behalf of the City of Vancouver, I would like to congratulate you on your re-appointment as Attorney General and your new appointment as Minister Responsible for Housing. Housing is one of the top priorities for our government and the City of Vancouver looks forward to working closely with your Ministry to create more forms of affordable housing, including addressing homelessness and housing instability for renters.

Thank you for the recent letter you sent to myself and City Council on December 11, 2020. We appreciate the Province's ongoing commitment to partnering with the City to provide more permanent housing and shelter spaces in Vancouver. BC Housing has done a great job of opening 1,500 temporary shelter spaces and over 290 extreme weather response shelter spaces across the Province this winter, including continuing to work with municipalities to open even more shelter spaces as required. Additionally, we are excited to work with you to launch BC's first-ever "navigation" centre, which City Council hopes can be expedited to help bring individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and who have unmet health needs, into a space where they can be provided with necessary health and other wraparound services. Finally, we appreciate the Province's support expediting the development of 98 temporary modular supportive homes at 1580 Vernon Dr., and plans to build 350 new units of permanent supportive housing throughout Vancouver.

I was pleased to note that the mandate letter for your Ministry includes continuing to deliver on the commitments in the Homes for B.C. plan, implementing a homelessness strategy, supporting much-needed housing for Indigenous peoples, freezing rents through 2021 and formalizing annual rent increases at the rate of inflation, as well as evolving the BC Building Code, introducing "right-to-charge" legislation and supporting local governments to set our own carbon pollution performance standards for new buildings. All of these actions align with our goals for non-market housing delivery to address Vancouver's housing crisis, as well as the City's Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Vancouver City Council and staff were pleased with progress made on the non-market housing file with former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Selina Robinson, and we continue to be thankful for the historic investments that were made to tackle housing affordability during her tenure, including:

- \$66 million in funding to create over 660 temporary supportive modular homes for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness with another 100 homes under development;

604-873-7621 [kennedy.stewart@vancouver.ca](mailto:kennedy.stewart@vancouver.ca)

City of Vancouver, Office of the Mayor, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V5Y 1V4

- \$74 million in funding for projects on City land, supporting the creation of approximately 750 non-market homes;
- Action on renter protections, including removing the vacate clause from fixed-term tenancies, limiting rent increases on existing tenancies, and emergency protections for renters during the COVID-19 emergency;
- Measures to address speculation in the housing market, including the speculation and vacancy tax; and
- Measures to support cities with development of new market and non-market housing, including the new authority to zone for residential rental tenure.

However, even with the substantial work undertaken by the previous government and the City, serious challenges remain in Vancouver when it comes to housing. This letter outlines our top priorities for working with your Ministry over the next four years to address the existing vulnerabilities in our housing system and deliver the social, non-market and supportive housing required to ensure everyone has a safe home in Vancouver.

#### 1. **Actions to address homelessness and encampments**

Like communities across the province, Vancouver has experienced a steady growth in homelessness. The most recent point-in-time count surveyed 2,095 people who identified as experiencing homelessness: 1,548 were staying in shelters and 547 were without any shelter and sleeping outside. The City welcomes the development of a provincial homelessness strategy as homelessness is not confined to municipal boundaries. The City prioritizes the creation of new homes with appropriate tenant supports and indoor spaces such as shelters and warming centres. There is also the need to provide interim access to basic services for people living in encampments such as Strathcona Park while indoor solutions are created. The City has already committed \$30 million to addressing homelessness and encampments, and welcomes partnerships with the Province to develop innovative solutions to address homelessness, such as the establishment of the first-of-its kind-in-Canada navigation centre.

Furthermore, we fully support the creation of complex care housing, to address dual diagnosis of addictions and mental health, as well as the prevalence of traumatic brain injury (TBI) within these populations. A pilot project in Vancouver of 50 complex care beds, with approximately \$25 million capital investment and \$2 million operating would present another lifesaving solution for those who receive complex diagnoses and are exiting homelessness.

#### 2. **Support single-room occupancy (SRO) revitalization and secure housing for low-income residents, including the City's \$1-billion strategy to acquire and rehabilitate private SRO buildings and interim action to limit rent increases in the private SRO stock**

Recently, the City initiated discussions with both the provincial and federal governments for the formal creation of a joint investment for SRO building acquisition, and to fund renovations or redevelopment to self-contained units. Staff analysis suggests that the City's long-term vision to replace all SROs with shelter-rate social housing could require government investment of approximately \$1 billion. Staff are working with senior governments to explore mid-term investment strategies to improve a significant portion of this vital stock. As an interim measure, limiting rent increases between tenancies via an amendment to the *Residential Tenancy Act* to include a special category for Single Room Accommodation that ties rent increases to the unit

instead of the tenant is recommended, as a critical but temporary solution in advance of replacement/revitalization of this outdated housing form. In the last four years rents in the privately owned and operated stock have risen by 16 per cent, and only 77 rooms currently rent at shelter rates.

**3. Continue work on strengthening protections for renters and investing in rental housing**

With over half of Vancouver households renting their homes, this is truly a city of renters. For this reason, Vancouver Council and City staff continue to prioritize working with the Province on strengthening renter protections and investing in a resilient rental housing stock as crucial priorities. This includes ensuring continued supports for renters during the COVID-19 emergency and funding for critical services provided by renter-serving legal and community organizations. It also means addressing fundamental insecurities facing renters in Vancouver by carrying out the recommendations of B.C.'s rental housing task force, especially work to end the practice of renovictions in private-market rental stock.

Specifically, under the Residential Tenancy Act, there is a need to provide clear guidance on what accommodations and actions by rental housing providers and tenants are acceptable during renovations to lessen misinterpretation or abuse of the Act. The City is seeking improvements to the Act to better accommodate tenants during renovations to ensure evictions are only approved if there is evidence that no reasonable accommodations can be made to maintain the tenancy and evictions for renovations are reserved for the rare instance of serious, major and long-term renovations.

Work to protect renters must also consider the importance of investments to ensure the safety and health of existing rental housing, as well as building up the supply of new rental housing to serve new and future residents, especially in key transit corridors. The Broadway Corridor Planning Process – aligned with the creation of the Broadway Subway – is a key opportunity where City and Provincial staff are already collaborating in order to land new affordable housing while preventing displacement of existing renters.

**4. Advancing partnerships to create and renew affordable housing**

The City has long recognized that the success of its efforts to create and renew affordable housing depends on partnerships across sectors and levels of government. Vancouver's 10-year housing strategy identifies a need for at least 12,000 social, supportive, and co-op housing units in the city by 2027. Current priorities in this work include supporting acquisition and renewal of existing private market rental by the non-profit sector, leveraging City land for new social housing, and partnerships to renew and redevelop existing co-op housing on City-owned land.

**5. Supporting an expanded role for cities in addressing housing affordability**

In approving Vancouver's 10-year housing strategy, the City committed to a significant investment of resources into housing, including land and capital contributions. These investments, along with other rising costs facing cities, have pushed the boundaries of current City revenue streams and authorities under the Vancouver Charter. As part of the Vancouver Plan process, Vancouver's current city-wide planning program, City staff are working to identify key areas for change and ideas for new approaches through a public partnership investment framework. Staff would like to involve participants from the Ministry in this process as it moves ahead.



I was pleased to note the alignment between the items listed in your mandate letter and the housing outcomes that we are working to achieve in Vancouver. By working collaboratively, we can maximize efficiency to ensure that critical priorities found in both our housing plans are addressed, while also creating a safer and more equitable housing situation for all Vancouver residents.

In addition to addressing the housing crisis, it is a top priority for City Council to work with senior levels of government to end the overdose crisis. On November 25, 2020, City Council unanimously passed a motion to request a federal exemption from the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* to decriminalize personal possession of illicit substances within the City's boundaries for medical purposes. City staff are currently working with Vancouver Coastal Health on a plan for decriminalization and would be pleased to include the Province in that work, as well as support your work with the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General and the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions to advocate to Ottawa to fast track the move toward decriminalization or develop a made-in B.C. solution in the absence of prompt federal action.

Finally, City staff would be pleased to support Parliamentary Secretary for Anti-Racism Initiatives, Rachna Singh's work with B.C.'s new Human Rights Commissioner to introduce legislation that will pave the way for race-based data collection. On June 24, 2020 City Council unanimously approved a motion supporting that the provincial and federal governments, as well as local health authorities, begin to collect and report disaggregated data including race, income, disability, and other social determinants of health that will inform evidence-based health-care and social program interventions.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of having adequate housing for all residents, a safe decriminalized drug supply and access to race-based data collection, as key public health and safety issue. As the pandemic is not letting up, urgent work on these files remains of utmost importance.

Thank you for our first meeting to discuss some of these priorities. As a follow up action, I would like to propose our staff meet early in the new year to discuss organizational priorities and identify projects that align with shared goals to begin collaborating on. Please have your staff connect with Paul Mochrie, Acting City Manager ([paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca)) to set up a time to meet.

Congratulations once again on your appointment. Vancouver City Council and staff are looking forward to working with you and your Ministry colleagues to provide the affordable housing that is needed to improve the lives of our residents and make Vancouver a more resilient and sustainable city that works for everyone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kennedy Stewart".

Kennedy Stewart  
Mayor, City of Vancouver

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## RE: City of Vancouver Invitation to SRO Vacancy Control - Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

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From: Low, Susan OHCS:EX  
To: Dunnet, Allison <allison.dunnet@vancouver.ca>, Awatta, Hajer <hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca>  
Sent: July 8, 2021 at 11:26:29 AM Pacific Daylight Time  
Attachments: image002.png

Hi Hajer,  
Please count me in for the 14<sup>th</sup>!

**Susan Low**  
Housing Policy Branch  
Phone: 778 698-1690

---

**From:** Betty Lepps <blepps@bchousing.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 5:37 PM  
**To:** Dunnet, Allison <allison.dunnet@vancouver.ca>; Malcolm Barrington <mbarrington@bchousing.org>; Dominic Flanagan <DFlanagan@bchousing.org>; Low, Susan OHCS:EX <Susan.Low@gov.bc.ca>; Thomson, John OHCS:EX <John.Thomson@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Awatta, Hajer <hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca>; Mauboules, Celine <celine.mauboules@vancouver.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: City of Vancouver Invitation to SRO Vacancy Control - Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

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Thank you Allison, I am looking forward to this as well.  
I will also let Hajer know who will attend on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Betty

---

**From:** Dunnet, Allison <Allison.Dunnet@vancouver.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 3:52 PM  
**To:** Betty Lepps <blepps@bchousing.org>; Malcolm Barrington <mbarrington@bchousing.org>; Dominic Flanagan <DFlanagan@bchousing.org>; Low, Susan OHCS:EX <Susan.Low@gov.bc.ca>; Thomson, John OHCS:EX <John.Thomson@gov.bc.ca> <John.Thomson@gov.bc.ca>  
**Cc:** Awatta, Hajer <hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca>; Mauboules, Celine <celine.mauboules@vancouver.ca>  
**Subject:** City of Vancouver Invitation to SRO Vacancy Control - Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

Good afternoon Betty, Malcolm, Dominic, Susan and John,

Looking forward to seeing you tomorrow for the SRO Intergovernmental workshop. I also wanted to also extend an invite to BC Housing and Ministry staff for a briefing on the SRO Vacancy Control work that is in development. We have met several times already with staff from the RTB to get their feedback but given the implications for the overall stock, both public and private, we thought you might want to see the options in development for s.13; s.16

And invitation is below from Hajer Awatta in my team who is coordinating the consultation. Please let her know if you would like to attend or send a rep.

Cheers,  
Allison

\*\*\*\*

I hope you are all well and managing to stay safe during these times. I'm writing to get your insights on some policy development the City of Vancouver is undertaking related to SROs. This past October, staff presented Council with an update on SROs, with a key focus on actions that protect marginalized, low-income SRO residents from homelessness. At



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We are reaching out to a variety of stakeholders for feedback this July. We would like to invite you to a consultation session to hear your feedback on the proposed regulatory options for SRA vacancy control from your perspective.

If possible, our staff team would like you to attend a one hour virtual session on **Wednesday July 14<sup>th</sup> 3:00-4:00 pm**. If you are willing to participate, **kindly confirm your attendance** and anyone from your organization you think should attend. **I will send meeting login information early next week.**

Thank you,  
Hajer

**Hajer Awatta**  
Social Planner  
Supportive Housing & SROs | Arts, Culture & Community Services  
City of Vancouver  
[hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca](mailto:hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca)  
T. 604.673.8438  
C. 604.404.0230  
Pronouns: she/her/hers



*Acknowledging that I work and live on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəṅəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt / səliłwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) nations.*



## City of Vancouver SRO vacancy control stakeholder engagement session follow up

From: Awatta, Hajer <Hajer.Awatta@vancouver.ca>  
Cc: Dunnet, Allison <Allison.Dunnet@vancouver.ca>, Hicks, Sarah <Sarah.Hicks@vancouver.ca>  
Sent: July 27, 2021 at 12:08:36 PM Pacific Daylight Time  
Attachments: COV SRO Vacancy Control Presentation for Stakeholder Consultation July 2021 .pdf

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.**

Good afternoon,

I would like to thank you all for attending one of the engagement sessions on the proposed SRO vacancy control policy held over the past few weeks and for sharing your feedback with us. Kindly find the presentation from the session attached for your reference. We would appreciate if you can respond to the discussion questions on the last slide or provide any other feedback and send them to [hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca](mailto:hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca).

We are continuing to work on refining the proposed policy and will be sharing updates on how the project is progressing in the Fall.

Best regards,  
Hajer

**Hajer Awatta**

Social Planner  
Supportive Housing & SROs | Arts, Culture & Community Services  
City of Vancouver  
[hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca](mailto:hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca)  
T. 604.673.8438  
C. 604.404.0230  
Pronouns: she/her/hers

*Acknowledging that I work and live on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaʔt / səliłwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) nations.*

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# Vacancy Control in SROs Stakeholder Consultation

July, 2021



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## RE: City of Vancouver SRO vacancy control stakeholder engagement session follow up

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From: Awatta, Hajer <Hajer.Awatta@vancouver.ca>  
To: Low, Susan OHCS:EX <Susan.Low@gov.bc.ca>  
Sent: August 4, 2021 at 8:51:09 AM Pacific Daylight Time

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Absolutely. That was my understanding as well.

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**From:** Low, Susan OHCS:EX <Susan.Low@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 4, 2021 8:47 AM  
**To:** Awatta, Hajer <Hajer.Awatta@vancouver.ca>  
**Subject:** [EXT] RE: City of Vancouver SRO vacancy control stakeholder engagement session follow up

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**Susan Low**  
Housing Policy Branch  
Phone: 778 698-1690

---

**From:** Awatta, Hajer <Hajer.Awatta@vancouver.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 3, 2021 5:32 PM  
**To:** Low, Susan OHCS:EX <Susan.Low@gov.bc.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: City of Vancouver SRO vacancy control stakeholder engagement session follow up

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.**

Hi Susan,

Thank you very much for your additional feedback on the proposed policy. I will share with the team.

Best regards,  
Hajer

---

**From:** Low, Susan OHCS:EX <Susan.Low@gov.bc.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 3, 2021 10:51 AM  
**To:** Awatta, Hajer <Hajer.Awatta@vancouver.ca>  
**Subject:** [EXT] RE: City of Vancouver SRO vacancy control stakeholder engagement session follow up

**City of Vancouver security warning:** Do not click on links or open attachments unless you were expecting the email and know the content is safe.

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Hi Hajer,  
I took a look through the slides again and thought some more about the proposed options. Here are some thoughts to include in your deliberations:

I hope these thoughts are helpful. Have a good day!

**Susan Low**

Housing Policy Branch

Phone: 778 698-1690

---

**From:** Awatta, Hajer <[Hajer.Awatta@vancouver.ca](mailto:Hajer.Awatta@vancouver.ca)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 27, 2021 12:09 PM

**Cc:** Dunnet, Allison <[Allison.Dunnet@vancouver.ca](mailto:Allison.Dunnet@vancouver.ca)>; Hicks, Sarah <[Sarah.Hicks@vancouver.ca](mailto:Sarah.Hicks@vancouver.ca)>

**Subject:** City of Vancouver SRO vacancy control stakeholder engagement session follow up

**[EXTERNAL] This email came from an external source. Only open attachments or links that you are expecting from a known sender.**

Good afternoon,

I would like to thank you all for attending one of the engagement sessions on the proposed SRO vacancy control policy held over the past few weeks and for sharing your feedback with us. Kindly find the presentation from the session attached for your reference. We would appreciate if you can respond to the discussion questions on the last slide or provide any other feedback and send them to [hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca](mailto:hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca).

We are continuing to work on refining the proposed policy and will be sharing updates on how the project is progressing in the Fall.

Best regards,  
Hajer

**Hajer Awatta**

Social Planner

Supportive Housing & SROs | Arts, Culture & Community Services

City of Vancouver

[hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca](mailto:hajer.awatta@vancouver.ca)

T. 604.673.8438

C. 604.404.0230

Pronouns: she/her/hers



*Acknowledging that I work and live on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəṅəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətaɣt / səliłwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) nations.*

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