

THE DOWNSIDE OF GENTRIFICATION

UPSCALE

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YORK ROOMS
259 POWELL
STREET



2011 Hotel Survey

By Ivan Drury & Jean Swanson

This report is dedicated to the memory of Verna Simard, Ashley Machiskinic, and all the people who have lost their lives in SRO hotels, shelters, and on the streets because they have been systemically denied dignified, safe, affordable housing.

CCAP acknowledges that our neighbourhood lies within Unceded Territory of the Coast Salish People: Tsleil-Waututh, Musqueum, Squamish.



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The Carnegie Community Action Project (CCAP) is a project of the Carnegie Community Centre Association, which has about 5,000 members, most of whom live in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) of Vancouver.

CCAP does community-based research and organizing on social housing, income and gentrification issues.

CCAP organizes residents to have a voice in planning for the future of the area.

Its overall goal is to create a DTES that is safe, healthy and affordable to the low-income residents who live here now.

If you find any inaccuracies in this report please contact Jean Swanson at jean.swanson@gmail.com.

Thanks to Vancity and the Vancouver Foundation for supporting CCAP's work.



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Support for this project does not necessarily imply that Vancity or the Vancouver Foundation endorse the findings or contents of this report.

design: flux

Cover: Steven Lippman recently bought the York Rooms. He also owns five other hotels with about 300 rooms altogether. He told CCAP on Nov. 28, 2011 that he will not pressure people to leave, but he will raise the rents in rooms as people move out.

DTES

The Downside of Gentrification

By Ivan Drury & Jean Swanson

Vancouver

December 2011

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Highlights

2011 has been the best year in at least a decade for new social housing in the Downtown Eastside (DTES), with 328 new units at welfare rates opening up. These apartments were fought for and won by a housing justice movement that has had many faces through the years – from the Olympics anti-evictions squats to the citywide Stands For Housing, from five years of the DTES Women’s March for Housing, to the Poverty Olympics, to CCAP’s housing policy advocacy and sometimes near-weekly protests. These 328 new units of low-income housing should be cause for celebration of the power of our Downtown Eastside social justice movements.

While this has been a good year for social housing, it has also been a year of gentrification. Speculators are buying hotels and transforming them into money-making investments.

Entrepreneurs are opening high end restaurants around these investments, pushing up real estate prices and sparking the interest of more investors in more properties. At least ten hotels with 398 rooms have either up-scaled already, are in the process of doing this, or rent to students only. This doesn't even count the hundreds of hotel rooms that haven't been upgraded but still have rents above what low-income residents can afford.

As hotels upscale they begin renting to mostly students and working people who can afford the higher rents, which go up to \$1,000 a month.

Low-income people who depend on welfare, disability or basic old age security can't hope to pay this much rent. Housing Minister Rich Coleman says new homeless shelters aren't needed because homeless people can move into new social housing. But new social housing has filled up with former SRO residents escaping not only poor conditions, but also unaffordable, gentrified rents. Meanwhile homeless people are stuck in crowded shelters or pushed out on the street.

The housing situation for thousands of DTES residents remains abysmal. At least 700 people are literally homeless and living in DTES shelters, not counting people living on the streets or couch surfing.

Thousands more live in about 3,500 privately- owned SRO rooms. Many of these have deplorable conditions with poor management, rodents, cockroaches, bedbugs, and danger, especially for women, transgender people and people with health issues. Another 1,500 people live in government or non-profit owned SROs that are usually cleaner and better managed but are still tiny and don't have private bathrooms or kitchens or meet modern earthquake standards.

This year the Carnegie Community Action Project’s (CCAP) fourth annual survey of privately owned and run hotels found:

- More hotels are excluding low income DTES residents from desperately needed housing by high prices and by class, racial and health profiling done by desk clerks;
- Only 7% of the rooms (235) are in hotels where all the rents are \$375 or lower, down from 12% last year;
- The number of rooms in hotels where the lowest rent is \$425 or more declined slightly (122 rooms) from last year;
- The number of rooms in hotels where the lowest rent is \$600 or more increased by 227 from last year;
- Vacancies remain minimal with only two in rooms that rent for \$375 or less;
- At least 13 hotels charge between \$200 and \$375 extra when two people share a tiny room;
- More hotels seem to be renting illegally on a daily or weekly basis.



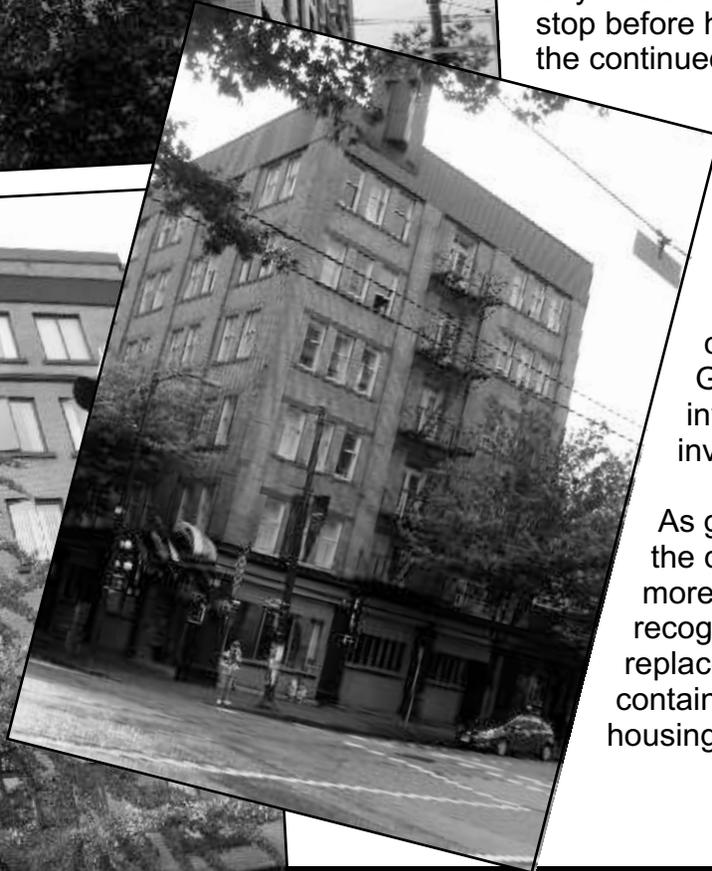
While the lowest rents in some hotels have dropped a bit, this is little comfort to low-income residents whose rents have already climbed high above what is affordable to them.

To pay rents in squalid rooms low-income residents do survival work such as binning, selling things on the street, scavenging and selling copper, hustling drugs, and survival sex work... unofficial and illegal work that puts them constantly in danger and at risk of arrest. As they pack into rooms to share rent, their conditions are made worse still.

While living conditions in SROS are not acceptable, people live in them because they are better than sleeping on the streets. Even the City of Vancouver recognizes that SROs represent residents' last stop before homelessness. This year's CAP SRO Hotel report tracks the continued loss of low-income SRO hotel housing by gradual and unregulated gentrification of the rooms into student and young-worker housing.

The civic SRA Bylaw and the Provincial Residential Tenancy Act offer no protection against the losses of hotel rooms to rent increases. And because the city doesn't attach a dollar value to "affordability" or conversions, these losses are not even counted. Gentrification, the pushing out of poor people by the invasion of people with more money and social power, is invisible in government reports and policies.

As gentrification gradually up-scales SRO hotels and closes the doors of these housing units to low-income people, it is more urgent than ever that all three levels of government recognize our housing and homelessness crisis. It is time they replace all 5,000 SRO hotel units in the DTES with self-contained, resident-controlled, dignified, low-income affordable housing.



Top to bottom: Low-income DTES residents were evicted from the Burns Block several years ago, now rents are \$870 to \$1,000 per month. About 70 rooms in the Columbia Hotel are now lost to low-income DTES residents because of high rents. The Lotus Hotel, owned by Steven Lippman, now charges rents low-income DTES residents cannot afford.

Survey Summary

Sample information

Number of hotels checked: 90

Number of hotels CCAP got info from: 69

Percentage of hotels CCAP got info from: 77%

Rooms in the hotels CCAP checked: 3,603

Rooms in the hotels CCAP got rent info from: 3,321

Percent of rooms in the hotels CCAP got info from: 92%

Rents

Most hotels have rooms that rent at different rates. Because CCAP cannot look at a hotel's books, it is not able to find out how many rooms rent at which rate. So CCAP's surveyors asked what the rent range was in each hotel.

For this report CCAP has *conservatively* grouped rents by the lowest rent in the rent range. ***This means that many hundreds of people actually pay higher rents than it appears by looking at our data.*** For example, where CCAP has classified a hotel as having rents that start at \$425, some rooms in that hotel rent for \$425, but others could be \$450, \$500, or more.

Number of rooms in hotels where all rooms rent for \$375 or less:

2009: 777	29%
2010: 362	12%
2011: 235	7%

Of those, 153 or 65% of the rooms that rented for \$375 or less in 2011 are in two Chinese Benevolent Society owned buildings, the May Wah Hotel and Toi Shan (Phoenix Hotel).

Number of rooms where the lowest rent is \$600 or more:
198

This does not include the Golden Crown (gentrified in 2010) for
Page 4

which CCAP couldn't get rent info. Last year, CCAP found only two SROs with a total of 41 rooms that rented all rooms above \$600. This year that \$600 and up list now also includes Pender Place, Burns Block, American, and Lotus.

Number of rooms where the lowest rent is over \$500:
510

This includes the Shamrock, which may have a lower rate for students, plus Cathay Lodge, Danny's Inn, the Grand Trunk, Harbour Rooms, the Hildon, and the Metropole.

Number of rooms where the lowest rent is \$425 and up:
2009: 1,416
2010: 1,689
2011: 1,567

While these numbers make it seem like rents may be falling slightly in a few (122) rooms, they may or may not actually be falling because our numbers are based on the lowest rents charged and many hotels charge a variety of rents above the lowest. If rents are falling slightly, we can only guess at the explanation for the decrease: the real estate market may be correcting against the over-optimistic hopes of landlords the year before; new social housing units may provide cheaper competition; a bad economy; more people sharing a room?

Vacancies

Number of vacant rooms renting for \$375 or less:
2009: 4
2010: 2
2011: 2

Number of hotels with vacancies: 17

The Colonial has 35 vacancies but is not filling them up at present. Does this mean they will be upscaling and increasing rents? Of the other 16 hotels with vacancies, only one, the Arlington, rents at \$375. The rest have rents starting between \$400 and \$500 a month.

Double bunking

Double bunking is when two people share a tiny SRO room. CCAP got an answer to our “double bunking” question from 54 hotels. Of those, 22 said they allow two people to share a room. Of those 22, rent information for double bunking was obtained from 17. Four hotels didn't charge any extra for an extra person, but 13 charged between \$200 and \$375 extra for a tiny SRO room.

At one SRO the desk clerk told CCAP's interviewer that the owner took each of the two welfare shelter cheques of \$375 and gave each person a \$50 kick back so the total rent was \$650. Hotel resident friends of CCAP have said this practice is not uncommon.

At the Colonial the manager said that when they had two people wanting to live together they put them in adjacent rooms.

Cramming two people into a tiny SRO room can be a way of disguising homelessness, especially for women.

Double-bunking adds another level of danger to SRO life because it pushes two people into a very small space, adding tensions to relationships already strained by poverty and, in some cases, existing abusive dynamics, contributing to violence against women.

Women, as well as transgender people, already live under heightened risk of sexual harassment, assault and violence from desk clerks, male residents of hotels, and unofficial guests in unregulated and unsafe private hotels. Double-bunking makes this problem even worse because it means women may have to choose between living in a tiny room with an abusive or violent man or living on the street.

In addition, charging over \$600 for these tiny spaces is rent gouging, making these decrepit rooms some of the

most expensive housing in Vancouver on a per-square-foot basis.

Why would people pay \$750 for a decrepit tiny room?

If a person is on welfare and getting \$610 a month, the answer is easy. Almost all the privately owned rooms in the DTES rent for more than \$375, the welfare shelter allowance.

If the rent is \$450, for example, \$75 of that has to come out of the \$235 that a person gets for food and other necessities. Since it's impossible to live a healthy life on \$235, let alone \$235 minus \$75, people try to get indoors as cheaply as they can so they'll have money left for their other necessities.

On top of this, welfare will pay \$375 for shelter only if you spend it on shelter. You can't get the \$375 unless you promise to pay it to your landlord. If the landlord charged \$350 or \$300 that's all that welfare would pay for shelter. In most cases welfare pays the shelter portion of a person's welfare cheque directly to the landlord so the tenant never sees the money and has no control over it.

So when welfare pays the landlord two \$375 checks for the same room in the same month, it doesn't reduce in any way the amount that the person on welfare actually has to spend on necessities. There is no incentive for a person on welfare renting the room to want to pay less than \$375.

Daily/Weekly rentals

Renting SRO rooms on a daily or weekly basis is illegal unless the hotel has exemptions from the city to do this. The Ivanhoe and Columbia are allowed to rent certain rooms daily or weekly.

CCAP interviewers found six additional SROs where the desk clerk or other person said they were renting by the day or week. They are the Arno, Lucky Lodge, Astoria, Cathay Lodge, Regent and Cobalt. CCAP will give this list to the city to check out and see if what we were told is true.

Discrimination against low-income tenants

Low-income people are excluded from housing by the straight cost of rooms and also by class, racial and health profiling done by desk clerk gatekeepers. CCAP interviewers found eight SROs with 305 rooms that are completely or partially occupied by students or seem to be giving students lower rates than other DTES residents.

These SROs are the Creekside, Pender Place, Hastings Rooms, Seaview Apartments, Lotus, Columbia, and Shamrock.

While students deserve housing they can afford, this is a disturbing sign of gentrification, making SROs, the home of last resort for low-income people, inaccessible to those people who need them the most.

In addition, the American, Golden Crown and Burns Block, with

93 rooms together, have all been renovated and rent in the \$600-\$1000 range, making them inaccessible to low income residents.

CCAP found four SROs where desk clerks told CCAP interviewers who looked like university students that rents were cheaper than they told CCAP interviewers who looked like low-income DTES residents. This number is probably low because CCAP only checked a few hotels twice, once with a student and once with a DTES resident.

In addition, we found at least four hotels where our surveyors were told they do not rent to women. They are the Vernon, St. Elmo, Station and Thornton Park.

CASE STUDIES

At the Lotus Hotel, owned by Steven Lippman, the lowest rent in the summer of 2010 was \$440. In the summer of 2011 CCAP researchers got two different rent prices. A low-income Aboriginal DTES resident was told rent was \$800 a month, and that there were no vacancies. A white university student was told by the same manager on the same day that rent was \$675, and that a room would be available at the end of the month. The manager said that they are “not supposed” to accept walk-ins, they are supposed to only accept new tenants through Craigslist applications for “quality control” reasons.

At the New Columbia hotel CCAP researchers found that rent was \$499 in 2010. This year CCAP researchers got two different rent prices. A low-income DTES resident was told that there was no space available, and that rent was \$800 a month anyhow. If he wanted to share a room then it would cost another \$200. A student researcher was told by the same desk clerk on the same day that he could get on a “student waitlist,” and that students get “a special student rate” of \$600 that isn't offered to “neighbourhood people.”

None of this discrimination is acceptable, and could be fought by toughening up the City SRA bylaw, introducing effective rent controls based on the unit, not the person, and adding “social condition” to the Residential Tenancy Act as a prohibited grounds for discrimination.

New Construction

2011 is the best year in many for new social housing opening up in the DTES, with 328 new units opening as follows:

Station Street: 80
Union Gospel Mission: 37
337 E. Pender: 103
525 Abbott: 108

But the future for social housing at rates that people on disability, welfare and basic seniors pension is not as promising:

2012 might see 24 welfare rate units in the Remand Centre, and 30 at the Pender Hotel for a total of 54.

Two buildings, 111 Princess (139 units) and 220 Princess (148 units), may start construction this year or next and be ready by 2013 or 2014.

The 15-20 units above the new library on E. Hastings St. may be ready by 2014.

Discussions are underway about a possible 39 units at welfare rate, along with more expensive rentals and maybe condos at the United We Can site on E. Hastings.

If the Sequel 138 development goes ahead, 18 social housing units are expected, but no one knows if they will be at welfare rates or higher. On the other hand, the low-income community wants a project here that could provide at least 100 units of social housing.

That's a maximum total of 418 units after 2012. Of those units, 284 were announced in 2007 and were supposed to have been completed in 2010.



Analysis

It will take 49 years to replace the SROs

Social housing can take six to seven years or more to build between announcement and opening. So social housing scheduled to open in 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 should be in the planning stages now, in 2011. But nothing is planned for opening in the latter 3 years.

If social housing is built at the rate it has been built in the 2005-2011 period, it will take 49 years to meet the city's goal of replacing the SROs with self contained social housing.

Footnote: This number assumes there were 5000 SROs in 2005, and that 622 have been replaced by decent social housing leaving 4378 still needing replacement, divided by an average of 89 units per year built between 2005 and the end of 2011.

New housing is desperately needed

The DTES has at least 700 homeless residents. (based on a CCAP phone survey of DTES shelters in October, 2011 and doesn't count anyone who sleeps on the street or couch surfs.)

Only 622 of 3,500 privately owned SRO have been replaced with decent social housing since 2005, with 2878 units still needing to be replaced. About 1500 residents are in government owned or non-profit operated hotels that are a slightly lower priority for replacement, for a total of just over 5000 low-income units needed for current DTES residents.

Ninety-five percent of 655 DTES residents surveyed by CCAP said they would like to continue to live in the DTES if they had safe, secure housing. CCAP is urging the city to buy 10 sites a year in the DTES to show it is serious about replacing dangerous, decrepit SRO housing with self contained units affordable to people on welfare, disability and basic old age pension.

Effective rent control is needed

The lack of effective rent control is also a major cause of rent increases. Rent control is based on the person, not the unit. As a result, when a person moves out of a room, it is legal for landlords to raise rents as high as they like. This is a financial incentive to landlords to evict low-income tenants. In addition, rent control is enforced on a complaint basis and many residents don't know what their rights are and have a hard time going through the complicated procedure required by the Provincial *Residential Tenancy Act (RTA)* when their rents are illegally increased.

Laws don't protect SRO tenants

If SRO tenants do manage to launch and pursue a complaint through the Residential Tenancy branch, the RTA does not offer adequate protection to tenants against retribution from vengeful landlords. SRO tenants are more vulnerable to retribution from landlords because of social discrimination against low-income people, drug users, Aboriginal people, people without legal citizenship status, sex workers, and people with mental and physical health struggles. Many SRO hotel residents do not trust the *Residential Tenancy* tribunal system to protect their rights and fear that the adjudicators will automatically side with the landlord.

The City of Vancouver's *Standards of Maintenance Bylaw* is similarly toothless when it comes to defending the rights of SRO hotel tenants. As we saw this year with the City injunction against the owner of the Palace and Wonder Hotels, City inspectors are unable to enforce the bylaws that are supposed to guarantee decent conditions in the hotels. We also saw with the Wonder and Palace Hotels that these processes work better when tenants are supported by grassroots organizers to access City inspectors and the *Residential Tenancy* system.

"One for one" replacement is not being met

The city's claim that "one for one" replacement of SROs is being met is not accurate. "One for one" means that each SRO unit needs to be replaced "one for one" by a new unit of self-

contained housing affordable to DTES residents. As the city's Housing Plan for the DTES says, "SROs are to be replaced with new self-contained social housing..." Unfortunately, the City seems to be classifying hotel rooms as low-cost accommodation even when rents are way over the \$375 a month that is all many DTES residents can afford.

Another problem is the City's classification of provincially owned hotel rooms, which are not self-contained or earthquake proofed, as new units of social housing. Although the hotels are newly government owned they are not "new" or adequate social housing and still need to be replaced with social housing that includes adequate space and private kitchens and bathrooms. The City's argument that the one for one policy is being met is not accurate because it includes as replacement units hotel rooms that are not self contained or new.

Some social housing not covered by RTA

Some DTES residents tell CCAP that provincially run hotel rooms are not secure housing because residents do not have rights under the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA). They say non-profit housing providers have an extraordinary amount of power over residents and that, occasionally, this has caused homelessness. Residents need the law to protect them from arbitrary and unfair management decisions in provincially owned rooms and all social housing in general.

Even social housing is too expensive

There is a disturbing trend for even social housing to rent at rates above what people on welfare, disability, and basic pensions can afford (\$375 a month). For example, the Remand Centre is being renovated as social housing. But only 24 of the planned 95 units will be at welfare rates. Rents for the rest of the units could go over \$700 a month, \$90 more than a single person on welfare gets for shelter and support. DTES residents are also disturbed that co-

ops are losing subsidies from governments and have to rent to higher income people in order to make their mortgage and maintenance expenses. Social housing units across BC may lose their subsidy too.

According to the BC Non profit Housing Association 2011 conference program, "Three-quarters of non-profit housing buildings in BC will see their operating agreements and associated subsidies expire by 2030. The design of these agreements had assumed that rental revenues will be sufficient to cover operating expenses once subsidies end, but in practice this may not be the case in all situations." The expiration of these agreements could impact hundreds of social housing units in the DTES unless governments take action to keep rents down.

Unless governments act now to stop rent increases, slow gentrification, increase incomes and build welfare rate social housing governed under the RTA, more low-income DTES residents will become homeless and more will be pushed out of their community.



Sam Snobelen, one of the DTES residents who helped gather information for this report, at the Columbia Hotel.

Recommendations

If DTES residents are to gain their basic human right to decent housing the following measures should be taken:

City government:

1. Amend the SRA Bylaw to define SRO Hotel “conversion” to mean raising rents above welfare and pension level shelter rates;
2. Buy 10 sites a year for each of the next 5 years for social housing in the DTES to replace all SRO hotel units and house homeless DTES residents;
3. Declare a moratorium on condo development in the DTES until the SRO Hotels have been replaced with safe, secure, self-contained and resident controlled low-income affordable social housing, and no one needs to sleep on the streets or in shelters;
4. Enforce maintenance standards in hotels and develop an SRO resident organizer structure to educate, support, and liaise between tenants and Standards of Maintenance and SRA Bylaw enforcement bodies;
5. Allocate funds now for low-income housing;
6. Embrace a women-centred philosophy in hotels with policies and practices that ensure women’s access and safety.

Provincial government:

1. Raise welfare, disability, and minimum wage substantially;
2. Reform the Residential Tenancy Act to enact effective rent control by rental unit rather than tenant;
3. Provide funds to build low income social housing to replace 1000 SRO units per year for the next five years;
4. Immediately spend the \$250 Million Housing Endowment Fund on low-income social housing;
5. Amend the Provincial Human Rights Act to include protections against discrimination for “social condition,” including class, poverty, and drug-use;
6. Ensure that residents of all non-profit social housing, including hotel rooms, supportive housing projects, and emergency shelters have full tenant rights under the Residential Tenancy Act.

Federal government:

1. Enact a national housing program;
2. Provide funds to build low-income social housing in the DTES to replace 1,000 SRO units per year for the next five years.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Which hotels were surveyed?

CCAP started with the city's 2009 SRO list for the DTES. We deleted buildings run by non profits because they are generally cleaner and cheaper: Kye7e, Sereena's Place, Cosmopolitan, Dodson, Hampton Hotel, Jubilee Rooms, Powell Rooms, Palace Hotel, Wonder Rooms, Heatley Apartments, International Inn, The London, and Princess Rooms. Even though we did not survey these buildings, CCAP recognizes that these buildings are not secure units of low income housing because their leases with non profits can expire. For example, the Colonial had been renting at \$375 a month last year when a non-profit was managing it. Now, private management is keeping rooms empty, a sign that they may be renovated for people who can pay more than welfare, disability and pension rates.

We added the Seaview, 358 Powell, the Golden Crown, American, and Burns Block to our list for investigation because they are all open now. We also added the Shamrock (on the city's closed list) because it is not closed. That left us with 90 open buildings that we visited. We got rent information from 69 buildings with 3321 rooms. Usually, the information was provided by a manager or desk clerk but sometimes we had to rely on a tenant because managers or desk clerks were not available after several tries.

Appendix 2

How CCAP did the hotel survey

For the hotel survey part of this study CCAP went door to door to 90 privately owned and run hotels within the DTES boundaries. CCAP approached each hotel like a prospective tenant looking for a room.

The CCAP surveyor usually spoke to the desk clerk or manager and asked about vacancies, rent levels, daily/weekly rentals, and student only rentals. The surveyor looked to see if there was a sign asking for guests to pay fees to visit residents and asked if there were any vacant rooms that were not being rented. Sometimes hotels were surveyed more than once by different people to test the data.

The survey was done by Ivan Drury, Paul Martin, Robert Bonner, Sam Snobolen, Fraser Stuart, Jean Swanson, Richard Marquez, and Purple Thistle students Marg Orlowski, Ander Gates, and Kurt Lenfesty. CCAP does not have the resources or the authority, like the City does, to actually inspect buildings, so this survey does not include maintenance aspects of the hotels. This information is as good as

what was told to CCAP surveyors by desk clerks, managers, and in a few cases, tenants, as CCAP has no way of looking at hotel records. CCAP also analyzed city and provincial statistics about new housing being built and provincially owned hotels.

Appendix 3

Why it's important for rents to be lower than \$375 a month

About 7000 DTES residents rely on welfare and disability income. Since 2007, \$375 a month is all single people have to pay for their rent, utilities and phone. If people on income assistance have to pay more than \$375, this money must come out of their support allowance of \$235, leaving them with not enough money to eat and pay for other necessities. This can lead some people to make the "hideous choice" of living on the street to save money. The DTES also has about 3000 seniors. Many of them rely on a basic pension of only about \$1200 a month. For these seniors, rents at or below \$360 a month (30% of their income) are considered affordable.

Appendix 4

Residential hotel rooms not safe, healthy or adequate

The city's DTES Housing Plan (p. 5) recognizes that the SROs are not good quality housing and calls for them to be replaced "with new self-contained social housing for singles," with supports for some residents. CCAP believes that DTES hotel rooms are not proper housing because they are tiny, about 10 by 10 feet. Residents usually have to share bathrooms with everyone on their floor and people don't have kitchens. How can low-income people eat cheaply without the means to cook?

In addition, the buildings are old and don't meet current earthquake standards. Many are poorly managed, filthy, and pest- ridden. Although not all DTES residents have health issues, many have told CCAP that living in a decent self-contained apartment is part of feeling respected and can be an important part of managing health issues.

In addition, SRO hotels are fundamentally unsafe spaces for women. A woman resident of the Regent Hotel explained, "When women leave their rooms at night to take a leak in the common bathroom we wonder if there is a man behind our door. We wonder if there is a man in the bathroom. And when we come back we wonder if there is a man waiting for us in our rooms. We feel locked up in our own rooms."

Appendix 5

SROs must be retained as an affordable last resort

While hotel rooms are not proper places to live, they are the housing of last resort for low-income people. Even though CCAP wants all the rooms replaced, it is crucial that they remain open and available at \$375 per month *until* replacement housing is available and until the homeless people in the DTES have homes. If the hotel rooms don't stay open and available to low-income residents, homelessness will increase as it has been increasing since 2002.

Appendix 6

What can current DTES residents afford to pay for rent?

The vast majority of current DTES residents are low-income people according to the Statistics Canada definition of the Low Income Cut Off (2006) line where a single person is considered low income if they have less than \$21,199 a year. Of course, many people who have less than \$21,199 a year, really do have a *lot* less. A person on welfare gets only about \$7,300 a year; on disability, \$10,800; on old age pension and guaranteed income supplement, about \$14,000, on minimum wage of \$9.50 (on Nov. 1, 2011) an hour, \$19,760. Shelter costs are not supposed to take up more than 30% of income, according to federal and provincial governments. This means that the amounts people in these categories have for rent are as follows:

Income source	Rent low-income people can afford based on 30% of net income
Welfare	\$375/month allocated by the province
Disability	\$375/month allocated by the province
Basic OAP and GIS	\$360/month
Minimum wage (full time)	\$494/month
Poverty line earnings	\$530/month
Average rent for 1 bedroom apartment in Vancouver	\$943/month

While not everyone in the DTES is on welfare or disability, it is crucial for the city and province to recognize that people working at minimum wage and pensioners cannot afford average rents for even bachelor apartments. Even someone making \$10 an hour could only afford rent at \$520 a month.

Appendix 7

Hotels where the lowest rent is \$425 or more

These are hotels where CCAP surveyors found the lowest rents to be \$425 or more in 2011:

Arno, 34 rooms
 Astoria, 84 rooms
 Balmoral, 168 rooms
 Cathay Lodge, 34 rooms
 Cobalt, 98 rooms
 Decker, 38 rooms
 Danny's Inn, 18 rooms
 Grand Trunk, 25 rooms
 Harbour rooms, 13 rooms
 Hildon, 134 rooms

Ivanhoe, 104 rooms
 Lotus, 110 rooms
 Metropole, 60 rooms
 New Columbia, 70 rooms
 Pender Lodge, 26 rooms
 Pender Place, 23 rooms
 Persepolis, 26 rooms
 Regent, 153 rooms
 Shamrock, 28 rooms
 Traveler's, 59 rooms
 Vernon, 32 rooms
 Vet's rooms, 9 rooms
 West, 98 rooms
 Woodbine, 45 rooms
 Burns Block, 28 rooms
 American, 37 rooms
 872 E. Hastings, 7 rooms
 630 E. Georgia, 6 rooms

Thanks for your help!

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