COPE

2026 ELECTION PLATFORM

Fight for Vancouver



Vancouver doesn't have to be this way.

Living in Vancouver means something to us.

Ken Sim is a uniquely bad Mayor, but he's just a symptom.

The reality is that the **rich and powerful control our political system**, **climate change is real and here**, and the **housing system is rigged against us.**

COPE is different because **we really fight for what is needed.**

And our record shows it works.

We won the **first rent control in BC in 1969**, the **Empty Homes Tax in 2017,** and **free transit for kids in 2021.**

We can **challenge the political power of the super-rich**, **fund our public services**, **take climate action**, and **un-rig the housing system.**

We can use the power of the city to create civic institutions of community care that can grow and thrive, and design them to be resilient.

What history shows is that the way you entrench social reforms is by **creating institutions that people feel truly improve their lives,** and **empowering healthy social movements** to defend and maintain those footholds against future cuts.

What we can win for people depends on **you getting involved**. This fight does not stop on election day.

If you need something, **you fight for it.** If your neighbour needs something, **you fight for them.**

-The COPE Team



SEAN **ORR**
FOR CITY COUNCIL



CHLOE **LESLIE**
FOR CITY COUNCIL



DEVYANI **SINGH**
FOR CITY COUNCIL



SOLOMON **YI-KIERAN**
FOR CITY COUNCIL



SUZIE **MAH**
FOR SCHOOL BOARD



MELANIE **CHENG**
FOR SCHOOL BOARD



GWEN **GIESBRECHT**
FOR SCHOOL BOARD



DERRICK **O'KEEFE**
FOR SCHOOL BOARD



TAMIKO **SUZUKI**
FOR PARK BOARD



SACIA **BURTON**
FOR PARK BOARD



JAMIE **HAN**
FOR PARK BOARD



T'UY'T'TANAT CEASE **WYSS**
FOR PARK BOARD

Fight for Housing

The housing market isn't *broken*.

It's working *exactly* as designed.

It's designed to raise our rents, create homelessness, and enrich the powerful.

It's designed to put the super-rich, landlords, and investors ahead of the rest of us.

Vancouver doesn't have to be this way.

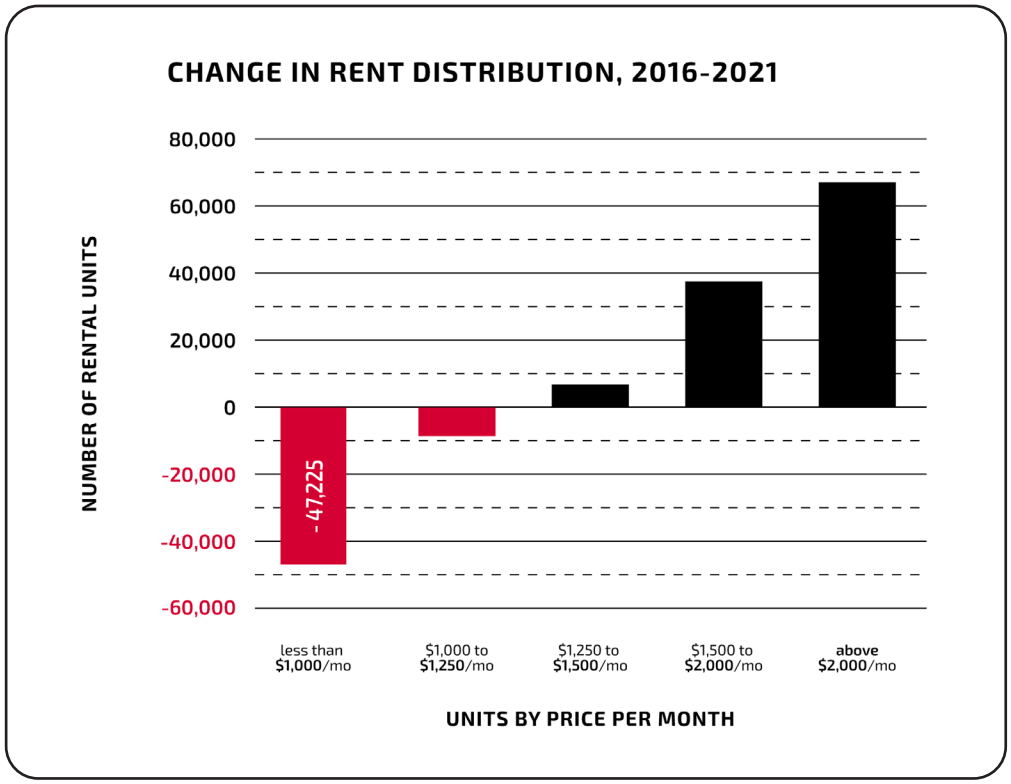
High rents and homelessness **are not inevitable.**

We can make housing affordable **if we're willing to fight for it.**

1.1 Stop the Loss of Affordable Housing

Between 2016 and 2021, **Vancouver lost over 47,000 affordable homes** to rent increases and demovictions. [1]

- **Close the loopholes that landlords use to jack up rents.** We'll fight to keep rents low by fighting to close the vacancy loophole to ensure that rent controls apply between tenants.
- **Triple the empty homes tax** to put more rental homes on the market and use the revenues to produce affordable housing. When COPE first proposed the Empty Homes Tax in 2014, it was intended to grow over time, but Ken Sim and ABC froze the EHT and created new loopholes for developers to keep units vacant.
- **Buy apartments and turn them into permanently affordable public housing and co-ops.** Create a right-of-first refusal policy that gives tenants, and then the city, first priority in purchasing existing apartments that go up for sale to turn into affordable housing. Create a Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition Fund to help land trusts, co-ops, and non-profits acquire rental housing and prevent displacement.
- **Support the development of community-led land trusts** aimed at protecting land from speculative development and creating permanently affordable housing for public benefit.



The average rent for a two bedroom purpose-built apartment in 2016 was $1,757. In 2024, it was $2,565. [2] [3]

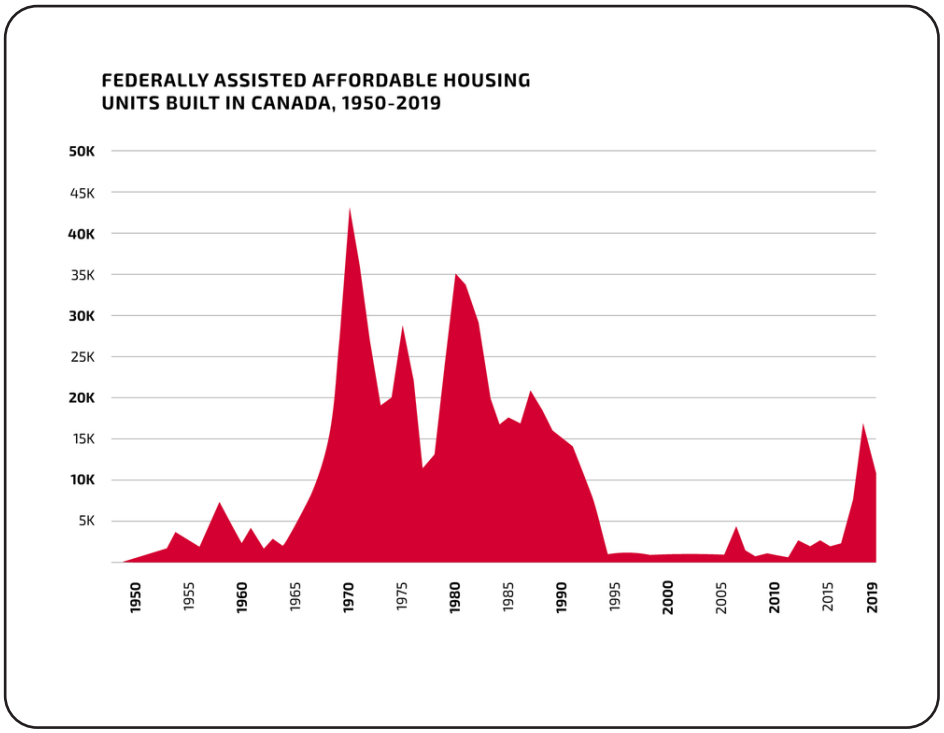
That's an increase of almost 50%.

During the same period, inflation was 24.94% [4]

- **Support, protect, and expand co-op housing** and fight to renew leases for existing co-ops at no charge to preserve affordable homes, prioritize building new co-ops on city-owned land, and push other levels of government to make generational investments in co-op housing.
- **Protect land held by non-profit community groups from sell-offs to speculative interests.** Land owned by faith-based groups and other charitable or non-profit organizations should be mandated to give right of first refusal to another non-market user before selling to the private sector.
- **Stop public land sell-offs that rip us off.** For too long, public lands have been given away to the rich and powerful and sold off to make up for budget shortfalls.
- **Preserve, leverage, and expand Vancouver's public lands for public benefit,** and implement a city-wide public land trust for democratic community control. We need to build permanently affordable public housing for every income level and in every neighbourhood, in partnership with the provincial government, the federal government, host nations, and non-profits.
- **Tax non-resident investors** to fund affordable housing for people who live here.
- **Mandate redevelopment fees for deeply affordable housing cover the cost of replacement units,** and end the waivers and giveaways of SRA conversion fees to developers.
- **Stop demovictions with a city-wide anti-displacement policy** that protects tenants rights, converts rentals into co-ops, and prioritizes development without displacement.
    - Plan the city to grow where there are single family homes, parking lots, and storefronts, **instead of tearing down affordable apartments.**
    - Retrofit existing affordable housing for **seismic safety and climate preparedness**, and work to transfer ownership to tenants, non-profits, or the city.
    - Take what works from the tenant relocation and protection policy (TRPP) and amplify it city-wide with new protections that **ensure that violently displacing tenants is not a viable business model.**
    - **Make developers bear the full costs of relocation** and coordinate redevelopments so renters get access to the same sized house, meeting the same accessibility needs, in their own neighbourhood.
    - **Appoint public workers to support tenants during developments**, funded by a fee on developers, instead of relying on "tenant relocation coordinators" hired by developers that sometimes ignore tenants or deny them compensation and support.
    - **Leverage city-owned land for swing-site housing for tenants** which can later serve as co-op or public housing.

In one vote alone, **Ken Sim and ABC waived over $20 million in SRA fees to a developer. SRA fees pay for affordable housing replacement. [5]**

In 2025, Sean Orr moved a motion to ensure that all SRA replacement fees are **actually charged to developers**. ABC voted it down. [6]



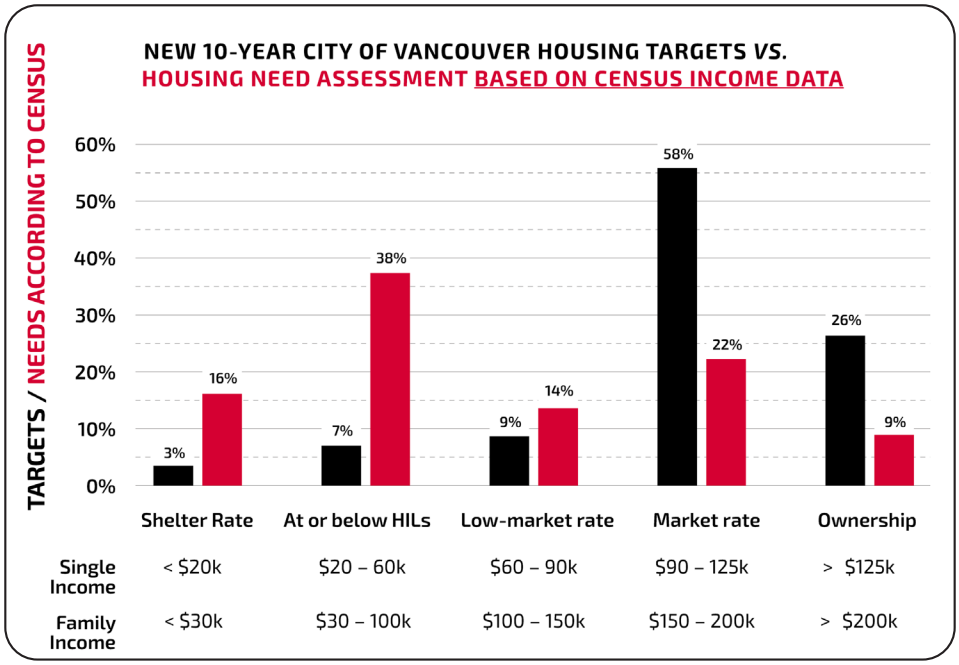
From the 1960s until the 1990s, **governments in Canada invested in affordable housing.** When they stopped, rents and homelessness skyrocketed. [7]

1.2 Permanently Affordable Public Housing

- **Negotiate, build, and secure 20,000+ units of affordable housing for Vancouver,** including: Indigenous housing, public housing, co-ops, community land trusts, non-profit housing, supportive housing, below-market inclusionary zoning, shelter-rate housing, and modular housing.
- **Act as a lead negotiator to bring together a portfolio of stalled public, co-op and non-profit housing sites,** and use every tool available to negotiate low-interest loans, secure senior government funding, and get affordable housing build.
- **Finance the construction of permanently affordable public housing through taxes on wealth, mansions, and empty lots**, bonds, and advocacy to senior governments.
- **Support taxation on land value,** capture the land-owner windfalls caused by proximity to public amenities, speculation, and zoning to use for public benefit instead of private profit.
- **Use it or lose it.** Vancouver doesn't need vacant lots. We need housing, public services, and local shops and restaurants. Incentivize development without displacement by placing a penalty on land-banking for profit.
- **Fight for affordable housing,** including shelter-rate housing for people on fixed incomes, housing affordable for minimum-wage earners, and middle-income housing for people on a living wage.
- **Make all neighbourhoods welcoming and supportive for people on all incomes,** with affordable housing in every neighbourhood and with accessible and affordable retail and services.

1.3 Protect Renters

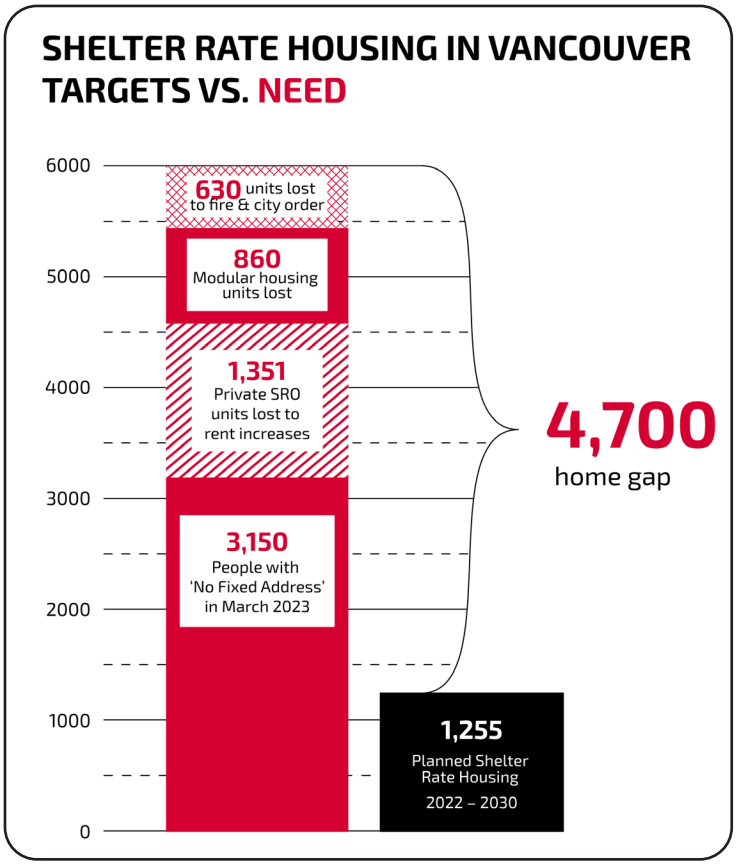
- **Bring back the Renters Office** - with teeth - and give tenants an advocate who is empowered to fight for them. The new Renters Office will track landlords and rents, help tenants to collectively bargain, and intervene in displacement.
- **Ensure Landlords maintain living conditions in units - or have the city do the repairs and bill them.** Tenants have a right to safe living conditions, including temperature control, working amenities, and safety from black mold and pests.
- **Allow pets in all rentals.** Renters should not have to choose between their family and a home.
- **Crack down on bad landlords who make breaking the law a business model.** Track landlord activity through a Landlord Registry, and impose real penalties on wrongdoing for profit.
- **Track rent history and growth over time through the Renters Office,** impose penalties on rent increases beyond the maximum, and inform public policy on rents with real-time information.
- **Ban rent-price collusion by any means** including algorithmic software, collaboration, or third party intermediaries.
- **Protect the right of tenants to organize into unions,** and require landlords to bargain with tenants in good faith.
- **Protect renters rights by law.** Instead of weak 'policies' like the TRPP, we can have strong laws that enshrine and protect tenant rights in Vancouver.



Only 1/3 of Vancouver residents can afford market rate housing, which comprises 84% of all new homes in the 10-year target. Are we building homes for people or investors? [8]

1.4 Tax Mansions to End Homelessness

- **Urgently address growing homelessness with all available city powers,** including a rapid deployment of emergency shelters, supportive programming, meal programs, tiny house villages, respite day spaces to reduce street activity, and storage spaces for unhoused residents' belongings.
- **Take the crisis of homelessness seriously,** and initiate a partnership between cities in the Greater Vancouver area to permanently address and prevent this crisis, leveraging partnerships to pressure the province and the federal government to secure funding to end homelessness.
- **End tent cities by providing affordable housing.** No one wants people to live in the streets, but until they actually have a place to go, we'll continue to have tents pop up in every neighbourhood.



Even if Vancouver meets it's 2030 shelter-rate housing targets, **we'll still be 4,700 homes below current needs.** [10]

The same system that jacks up our rents pushes people into homelessness. **For every $100 the median rent increases, homelessness increases by 9%.** [9]

- **Stop inhumane street sweeps.** During police activity targeting the homeless, people lose their belongings, ID, and other essentials. We need a human rights based approach.
- **Ban "hostile architecture" in public space**, including transit hubs and community centres. The solution to homelessness is homes, not stigma.
- **Protect the human rights of people without homes.** Follow the National Protocol for Homeless Encampments in Canada's 8 key principles for recognizing human rights of encampment residents. A system that violates the human rights of your neighbours will also come for you.
- **Restore the DEOD (Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District)** and end the developer windfall for condos in the DTES.
- **Tax mansions to end homelessness.** It's unacceptable that in a city as rich as Vancouver, there are so many people living without safe homes. By taxing the wealth held in mega-mansions, we can rapidly build the housing we need to end homelessness.

Homelessness has increased by over 12% under Ken Sim. 42% of respondents said an eviction was the cause of their homelessness. [11]

The People's Audit

2.1 Reverse Course on Ken Sim and ABC *Immediately*

- **Identify and report on what happened and why under Ken Sim's tenure,** and who bore the consequences for the decisions made.
- **Improve transparency and expose the problems at the city with a worker-led audit,** interviewing current and past city workers, city partners, and the public to improve service delivery and cut waste.
- **Fix the ways that the bureaucracy is broken,** by reviewing service and systems performance, patron experience, staff climate, and bringing more voices to the table to transform the City.
- **Advance an emergency transitional budget to stop and reverse direction.** COPE will take action right away to reverse changes made at the City by Ken Sim and ABC.
- **Restore the Renters Office and give it the power to crack down on bad landlords.** We'll fight for the strongest tenant protections in the country, fix up apartments that landlords neglect and bill them for it, and make it easy to turn rental apartments into co-ops.
- **End Ken Sim's cruel freeze on supportive-housing, and get serious about fighting homelessness.** We'll speed up the affordable and social housing we need by bringing back the social housing initiative, restore the DEOD zoning, and work with non-profits and other levels of government to accelerate stalled projects that would provide real affordability.
- **Bring back Vancouver's slashed climate programs.** Ken Sim and ABC have reversed the city's progress on climate change, cut the sustainability department, put the 2026-2030 climate plan on hold, and cut climate safety programs. We'll make Vancouver a climate leader.
- **Reverse the cut to the Empty Homes Tax (EHT), and then triple it.** The EHT was scheduled to go up to 5%. Ken Sim stopped the increase, and then created a new loophole that's leaving more homes empty. COPE will enforce the empty homes tax properly, close the loopholes, and phase in increases to 9%.
- **Appoint a team to deliver an Affordability Audit for Vancouver,** that outlines the places where people's cost of living is growing, and where the city can use its power to lower costs, and to set new targets and a path to a more affordable city.

2.2 Expose the Damage, Clean up the Mess

- **Interview workers, residents, and stakeholders and review records to identify how and why major decisions against the public interest were made at the city,** including the layoffs of hundreds of staff, the replacement of the city manager, and the rollback of affordable housing requirements and development fees.
- **Fight waste and bureaucratic absurdities from Ken Sim's mismanagement.** If there's wasted money at the City on management bloat, consultants, and outsourcing, strange bureaucratic loops, and duplication of work, the frontline workers know it best.
- **Identify why progress towards city goals of affordability, families, renters, and climate has stalled or reversed under Ken Sim, and get back on course.** The city is failing to meet its targets on affordable housing, homelessness, transportation, and climate under Ken Sim. Vancouver's Healthy City strategy was abandoned without reporting back on how Sim failed. We need to review why these areas are being neglected, and change priorities to get back on target.
- **Review City AI data use policies,** and investigate whether private city information was fed to American tech companies through large language models. We need to ensure that private city information has not been shared by senior staff or elected officials that undermine the data integrity of the city.
- **Identify and crack down on violations of public trust.** Where improper conduct against the public interest is found to have potentially occurred, the city must take definitive action to restore trust, using an empowered integrity commissioner, and if necessary, an investigation.
- **Enhance the independence of the Auditor General,** and give them the resources they need to conduct the investigations that are needed. The Auditor General does great and important work, but they are accountable to city council.
- **Implement the Auditor General's 10 Recommendations in their 2026 Land Sales Audit** to prevent botched land deals that cost the city millions. Ken Sim and ABC received this shocking report outlining $60 million+ in lost revenues and chose not to act. **We will.**

2.3 End the Influence of Billionaires and Lobbyists at City Hall

- **Empower the Integrity Commissioner to hold politicians accountable,** and update the city code of conduct to prioritize breaches of public trust. The integrity commissioner found Sim and ABC councillors broke the code of conduct by coordinating amendment wording and expected votes in private group chats before public meetings. When a separate investigation found Sim misused his office to "objectively harass" Councillor Orr, ABC voted down any accountability for his conduct.
- **Fight for campaign finance reform to close the loopholes the super-rich can use to buy politicians and elections.** A lack of tax rebates for municipal elections means that the board is slanted toward the rich. Third party advertisers are poorly regulated, and it's too easy for big money groups to coordinate donor networking campaigns without regulatory oversight. We'll fight to change that.
- **Ban the revolving door between industry and government.** COPE will implement mandatory cooling off periods between appointments in city government, and work in private sector industries that lobby the city.
- **Bring in a municipal lobbying registry.** The public deserves to know how and when the super-rich are influencing decisions made by city governments. The city can take steps on its own, but we'll fight to strengthen city authority and make sure toxic influence can't hide from public oversight.

Fight for Vancouver

3.1 Build the Commons

- **Expand library hours to be open 7 days a week,** and give libraries the support they're asking for, including funding for mental health workers, and better working conditions.
- **Increase 24/7 accessible public washrooms** with permanent infrastructure and sanitation stations across the city.
- **Expedite needed Parks, Recreation, and Community Centre upgrades,** especially for community centres that have been historically under-maintained.
- **Support the growth of tool libraries,** libraries of things, and Vancouver's circular economy.
- **Make Vancouver friendly to dogs and dog owners** by improving tree canopy at dog parks, increasing public access to water and dog waste bags, and creating more off-leash spaces.
- **Expand VanWifi across the city** to allow for more free and open internet access, prioritizing currently under-served areas.
- **Upgrade playgrounds and parks where children play** with a focus on neighbourhoods that are being left behind.
- **Expand library programming to fully fund programs** for newcomers, seniors, families, and teens, including digital literacy, tax-filing assistance, and ESL courses.

Every dollar invested in increased library access generates $5 in economic benefit to our community. [12] This doesn't account for the non-measurable economic benefits that come from increased literacy, employment, and social wellbeing.

- Work together across City Council, School Board, and Park Board to **use public assets for the public good,** and grow Vancouver's **social infrastructure.**
- **Affirm an independent, democratic Park Board as essential in stewardship of Vancouver's commons,** fund and empower them to do their work for the public good, prioritize the long term, and protect our public parks from sell-offs and development.
- **Ban private entities from collecting profits from the use of public amenities such as tennis courts and fields,** and oppose sharing agreements for public amenities that limit participation based on the ability to pay.
- **End the developer tax break** that creates gravel pit dogparks and shoddy community gardens.



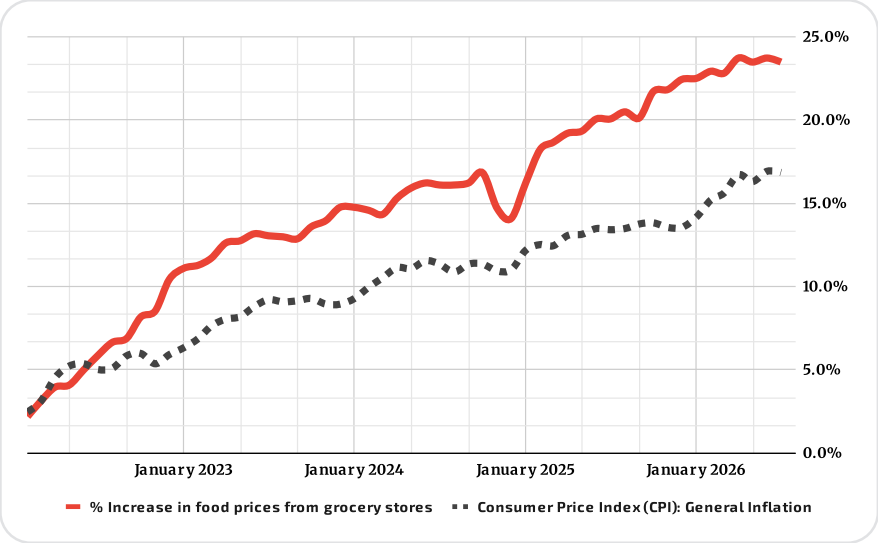
SEAN **ORR**
DEVYANI **SINGH**
SOLOMON **YI-KIERAN** 易行天
CHLOE **LESLIE**

FOR **CITY COUNCILLOR** WITH ***COPE***

Montreal has almost three times as many pools per capita as Vancouver.

- **Build more public pools across the city** and respect the 2022 plebiscite and build a new 50 meter pool in Vancouver.
- **Train and hire the lifeguards and swim instructors we need** to keep pools open and staffed, stop line-ups, offer swimming lessons to meet demand, and keep people safe at Vancouver's beaches.
- **Support and expand the Leisure Access Program (LAP)** to ensure residents of all incomes can access our facilities and city services.
- **Empower community-led initiatives to build on Vancouver's public commons,** and help residents to deliver services to the community including maker spaces, community fridges, free stores, and user-led upgrades to community facilities and amenities.
- **Oppose the co-opting of public lands by private interests** and oppose industrial infrastructure in public parks.

YEAR OVER YEAR GROCERY INFLATION VERSUS CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, SINCE 2022



46% of food in Canada is wasted. [13]

At the same time, almost 1/4 of BC residents don't have secure access to healthy food. [14]

3.2 Make Groceries More Affordable

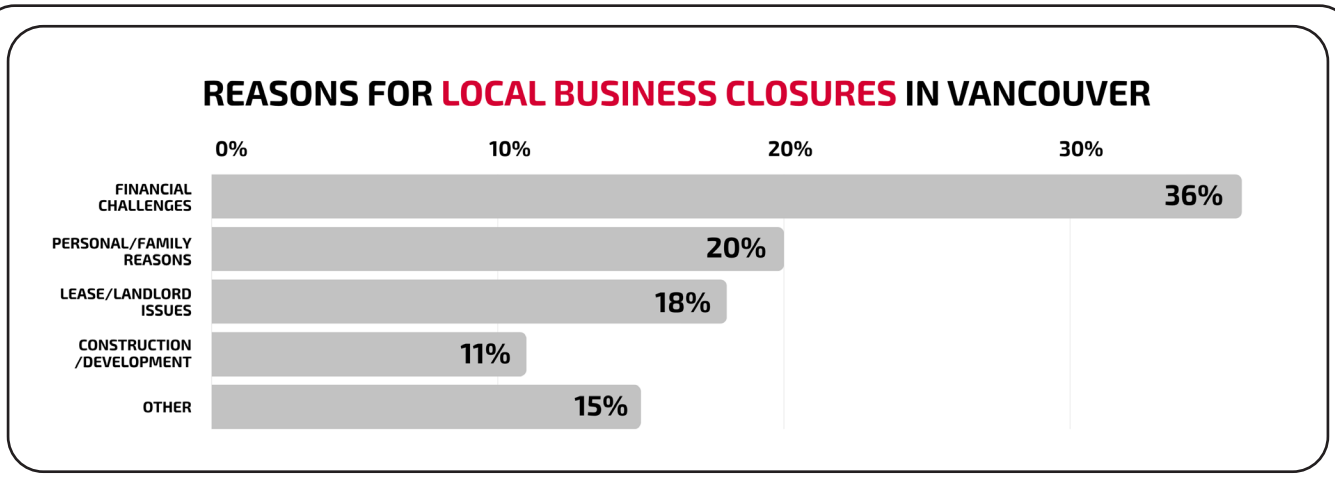
- **Stop food waste with an edible food recovery law targeting big box stores and chain restaurants.** Every day, thousands of pounds of edible food is wasted in Vancouver. We can recover it and ensure it's distributed to people instead of thrown away.
- **Protect affordable community grocers from rent hikes, sell-offs, and rising prices,** and invest in local economy staples that bind communities together.
- **Establish a public grocery pilot project** to provide affordable groceries in neighbourhoods with the most need.
- **Reinstate Vancouver's Food System Planner roles** and ensure the department has adequate staffing and support to carry out this work.
- **Integrate and coordinate our network of community gardens to grow local food**, and increase access to growing space.
- **Partner with community groups to fund and create public food distribution networks** using publicly owned spaces and community kitchens.
- **Ensure no child is hungry with a universal breakfast and lunch program at Vancouver School Board.**

US Research found that **grocery chains cut prices for everyone** in areas with universal breakfast and lunch programs for elementary students**. [15]**

- **Use the buying power of the city to buy in bulk from local farmers** and distribute food at a discount to affordable community grocers, non-profits, public grocers, and school meal programs.
- **Expand existing health and affordable meal programs and establish community kitchens.** Expand community gardens, seed sharing, food storage, and facilitate skill sharing and training. Vancouver should be working towards food justice, empowering neighbours to build networks of solidarity and increase food sovereignty and security.

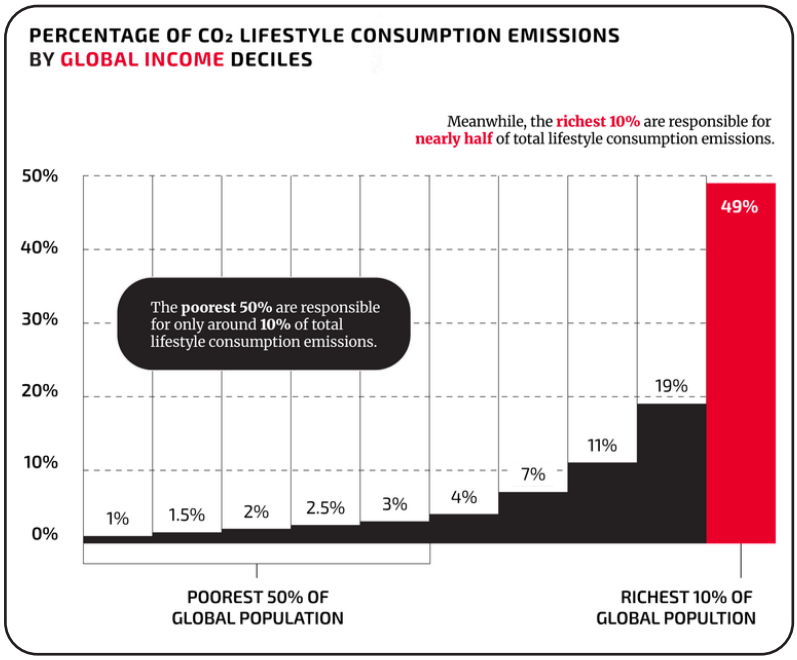
3.3 Protect the Local Economy

- **Introduce a Buy Vancouver policy** to encourage and promote the development of sustainable circular economic systems in Vancouver and the lower mainland, prioritize local producers for city procurement, build resilience against US tariffs and create jobs.
- **Protect local shops and restaurants, and take on the big business oligopolies that threaten their ability to function.** Local businesses are part of what make Vancouver our home.
- **Support right-sized retail by requiring a mix of commercial unit sizes in new developments,** limiting oversized street-front retail spaces on key corridors, and using zoning, incentives and city-owned land to create more affordable storefronts for local businesses, independent retailers, social enterprises, and co-ops.
- **Support the local economy by offering affordable city-owned commercial spaces** to social enterprises, co-ops, and sharing economy initatives.
- **Create a Vancouver Local Business Office** to help small businesses navigate permits, rules, and resources.
- **Support new and existing worker co-ops** with waived fees, expedited permitting, and support from the city.
- **Protect local businesses by pushing for changes to commercial tenancy agreements.** The current system is not working. We need standardized leases and negotiation rules, landlord responsibilities, and preventing rent hikes that are catastrophic to small and local businesses.
- **Support business license reforms** to make it easier for start-ups to get off the ground, including supporting the ability for businesses with different licensing requirements to share space and save rent.
- **Reinstate the Community Benefits Agreement policy** to ensure that developers are creating local jobs, supporting the local economy, and giving back to to the communities they profit from.



Since 2020, almost 3000 local businesses have closed in Vancouver. **18% of closures were due to landlord or lease issues.** [16]

In 2025, V**ancouver's storefront Vacancy Rate was 10.2%**, with 5-7% being normal.



We can't get to the root of the climate crisis without addressing economic inequality and the power of the super-rich.

According to Oxfam International, the richest 1% is emitting more carbon than the poorest 50% of humanity combined. [17]

3.4 Climate Defence Strategy

- Accelerate Vancouver's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy into a full **Climate Defence Strategy** that:
  - **Gets more with less** by investing in tool libraries, circular economy initatives, and zero-waste programs.
  - **Upgrades our public infrastructure and housing** to save lives during future climate events.
  - **Protects our food system from climate shocks** by investing in local food production and creating systems to crack down on food waste.
  - **Help communities prepare for climate events and disasters,** whether it's heat waves, snow storms, or atmospheric rivers.
- **Get Vancouver back on track to meet the 6 climate action targets we're currently failing** including walkable neighbourhoods, active transportation and transit, zero-emission vehicles, zero-emission space and water heating, low carbon materials and construction, and restored coasts and forests.
- **Lead the country on climate change, meeting and exceeding IPCC climate targets,** and using the city of Vancouver as a bully pulpit to push for climate justice provincially, federally, and globally.
- **Support Wind, Water, Solar energy for Vancouver** by encouraging renewable energy production across the city, coordinating climate-conscious energy upgrades at neighbourhood scale, and shifting from a passive consumer of provincial energy towards a community-led and worker-owned green energy grid.
- **Hold the super-rich accountable for climate change by re-joining the "Sue Big Oil" lawsuit** and force big polluters to pay their fair share for the climate crisis they caused.
- **Oppose the dredging of the Burrard Inlet,** and fight fossil fuel infrastructure and tankers in Vancouver's waterways.
- **Honour Indigenous rights, knowledge, and voices on climate.** Mi'kmaq Elder Albert Marshall coined the concept "two-eyed seeing" as a way to integrate the best insights from both western and indigenous traditions in pursuit of justice and sustainability.

- **Grow the urban forest canopy to 30% by 2050** with a priority for climate-resilient native species.
- **Increase biodiversity at public parks,** plant native species, and support the growth of healthy local ecosystems.
- **Invest in affordable and reliable public transit infrastructure**, active transportation, and cycling infrastructure to get drivers out of polluting cars and meet our climate goals.
- **Prioritize the growth of green spaces and parks,** especially in dense areas where the amenity density is not keeping pace with development.
- **Support circular economy initiatives and aggressively move towards a zero-waste economy,** supporting programs like tool libraries, community repair programs, free stores, and programs like FreeGeek that repair electronics and recirculate them.
- **Taxing the super-rich is climate policy.** Concentrating income at the top accelerates emissions, while fairer income distribution reduces emissions.



T'UY'T'TANAT CEASE **WYSS**
SACIA **BURTON**
JAMIE **HAN**
TAMIKO **SUZUKI**
FOR **PARK BOARD COMMISSIONER** WITH ***COPE***

The UN Environmental Programme's September 2026 report: "Limiting Overshoot" says **it's now unavoidable that the planet is going to warm beyond 1.5 degrees,** and with urgent action, we can optimistically peak at 1.8 degrees. [18]

Every step beyond 1.5 degrees will create **more intense climate impacts,** and increase the chances of **extreme weather**, the loss of wildlife, **flooding of coastal cities**, disruptions to **food supply**, and **threats to public safety.**

Climate change is hitting us now. The 2021 heat dome killed 619 people in BC, and we choke on wildfire smoke almost every year.

How hard climate change hits us in the future will be based on **how well we defend ourselves.**

We have to **upgrade our infrastructure** to weather the climate storms ahead, and we need to **empower community members** to take action on snowstorms, flooding, earthquakes and heat waves.

While the public was largely made aware of the real threat of climate change in the 1980s, we know now that **the fossil fuel industry knew about the environmental impacts of burning oil and gas as early as 1956.** [19]

Instead of working to address the impending crisis, **Big Oil responded by funding disinformation and misleading the public**, wasting critical time for our planet to make more profits for rich investors. [20]

3.5 Better Transit and Transportation

- **Fight for a fast and free public transit system** in Vancouver and BC, and take steps on that path immediately, such as:
  - **Fare-free bus route pilots** in Vancouver.
  - Expanding **free transit to all youth under the age of 18.**
  - An affordable **low-income transit pass** for people who earn less than $40,000 a year.
  - **Free transit on election days,** holidays, and around major community events.
- **Prioritize active transportation & cycling** by:
  - Closing the gaps in our city-wide cycling network and expanding **protected bike lanes.**
  - Adding **new cycling routes** including a Broadway Bike lane.
  - **Better lighting and safety protocols** for transportation corridors in public parks.
  - **Connecting active transportation networks and micro-mobility** to all community centres and public recreation facilities.
  - **Giving funding and space to community bike repair and recycling initiatives** to make it easy to access affordable bikes.
- **Expand bikesharing, scooters, and micro-mobility** to give people transportation options, and **bring them under public community control and ownership.**
- **Invest in covered bus shelters and benches across the city** to ensure that everyone waiting for the bus can do so in comfort and with cover.

Half of bus stops in Vancouver have **no bus shelters or benches.**

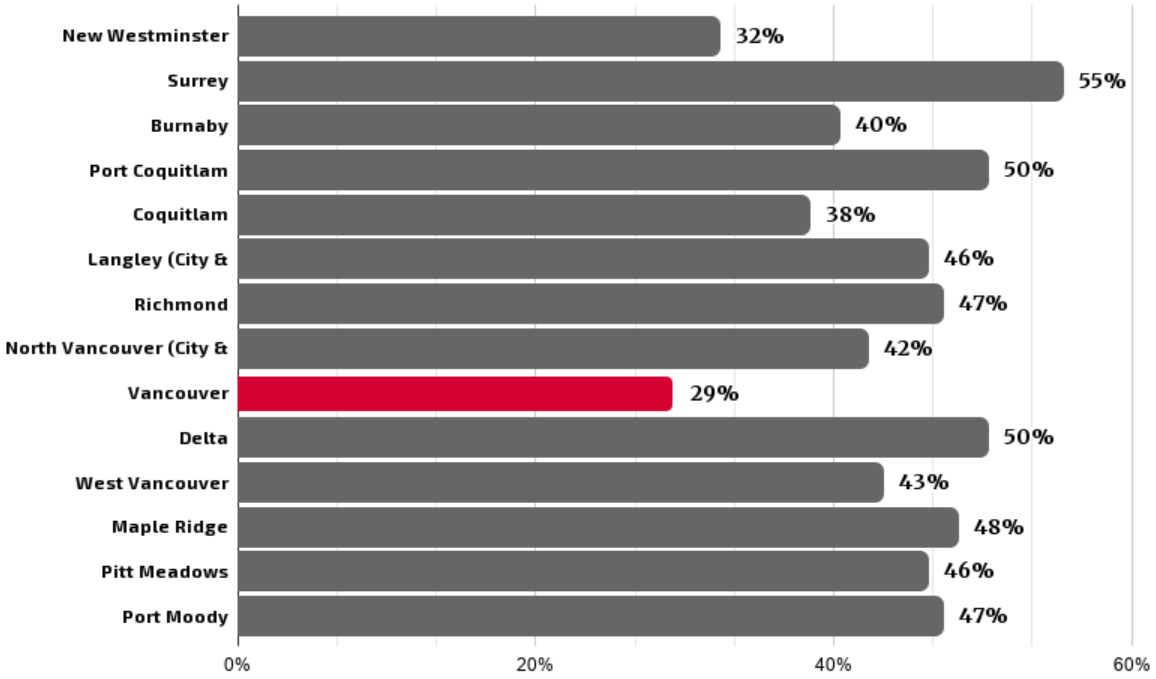
COPE Wins: Free Transit for Kids

In 2019, COPE representatives on City Council, School Board, and Park board work with the advocacy group *AllOnBoard* to move motions to support **free transit for kids** under 12.

In 2021, the Province of BC announces they're adopting COPE's policy, **making transit free for kids province-wide.**

- **Fight to improve public transit service** with rapid transit, more frequent buses, SkyTrain, and infrastructure upgrades that improve reliability and speed.
  - **Extend rapid transit across the lower mainland,** including rapid buses and skytrain, including completing the Skytrain to UBC.
  - **Supporting infrastructure upgrades like bus lanes** that prevent bus bunching and transit delays.
  - **Fight to reverse cuts to Translink and restore frequency of bus service,** especially in working-class neighbourhoods that have had their service clawed back after COVID.
  - **Push to integrate the Compass Card system with micro-mobility** as part of a path to a unified public transit system.
- **Advocate for worker and rider representation on the Translink Board** to ensure that everyone's voice is heard.
- **Continue the fight to bring HandyDart under public control** to improve service quality for people with disabilities.

FAMILY RATES IN METRO VANCOUVER CITIES



Vancouver has the **lowest proportion of family households** in Metro Vancouver. [21]
As of 2024, City Staff noted a shortfall of ~4,200 childcare spaces for ages 0-5. [22]

3.6 Keep Families in Vancouver

- **An Affordability Audit for Families.** Identify the areas that are impacting the pocketbook of families in Vancouver, and create a strategy to use public power to fill gaps where the market is failing, create affordable programming for children like tutoring and sports, and to lower everyday costs.
- **Fight for and fund an expansion of public childcare spaces.** Negotiate with developers, provide public land, and seek funding from senior governments to secure at least 2,200 new public childcare spaces by 2030.
- **Establish drop-in spaces at community centres and schools** so parents can access affordable, safe, and reliable childcare in public spaces.
- **Accelerate before-and-after school childcare spaces** at elementary schools across the city.
- **Track and report on childcare spaces,** bothprivate and public, to ensure that we're meeting our targets and producing the childcare we need.
- **Use city-owned land to deliver city-owned spaces for children's services and programming,** including theatre, STEM, sports and recreation, education, and musical programming.
- **Prioritize housing for families.** In public sector housing, or in negotiations with private developers, we need to ensure we're securing housing that is big enough, and affordable enough, to house families.

3.7 Put Students First at Vancouver School Board



SUZIE **MAH** 馬陳小珠
MELANIE **CHENG**
DERRICK **O'KEEFE**
GWEN **GIESBRECHT**

FOR **SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE** WITH ***COPE***

- **Prioritize classrooms and services for students as first priority.**
- Create a **universal school meal program** for all VSB students.
- **Use school facilities for before and after-school childcare,** for child and youth-centred arts and sports programming, and for school gardens.
- **Reverse ABC and Vancouver Liberal cuts to programs that provide support to vulnerable students** like the safe and caring schools program and the Britannia hockey academy.
- **Support arts and recreation programming for students at VSB,** including music and band programming, sports and recreation, theatre, and extracurricular activities that allow students to develop skills and express themselves.
- Promote **environmental safety in schools:**
  - Demand the provincial government provide more funding and approve faster builds for schools that need repair, replacements, and for neighborhoods that need new schools.
  - Mandate renewable energy sources on all new builds and major renovations.
  - Implement an urgent action plan for seismic upgrades, and air-quality upgrades.
- **Put student safety and well-being first by funding youth workers and mental health councillors** instead of school liaison officers that the BC Human Rights Commissioner called "contrary to human rights obligations."
- Push the province for more public school funding, to **reduce class sizes**, and support **tuition-free adult basic education (ABE) programs.**
- **Affirm public education as a public service for everyone, not just families in the school system.** A city where everyone can access educational opportunities and thrive benefits us all.
- **Treat school properties as public lands, protect them, and use them for public benefit,** instead of selling them off to make up for budget shortfalls.

- **Fight for transparency and accountability at the Vancouver School Board (VSB)** by promoting engagement with parents, students, unions, employees and the broader community in VSB decision making through:
  - **Open, moderated live-streamed, meetings** which allow for public questions.
  - **Town halls, brainstorming sessions, and participatory budget processes.**
  - **Transparent and ongoing oversight of the Superintendent** as the sole employee of the trustees.
  - **Conducting regular reviews of governance and operational policies** to promote the empowerment of elected trustees to make decisions on improving public education.
  - **Fewer private board meetings.**
- **Fight against public education funds going to elite private schools.** At the same time working class students have program cuts and closures, public funding for private schools is going up.
- **Make schools where every student can thrive** by promoting inclusive, equitable, accepting and safe school environments for everyone.
  - **Properly fund inclusive education** for students with diverse learning needs.
  - **Facilitate Indigenous educational practices** within school programming.
  - Adopt recommendations from the BC Human Rights Commission to **respond to and fight racism in schools.**
  - **Push back against attacks on sexual orientation and gender identity education** in schools.
  - **Align special education funding with identified special education needs,** including per-student funding for students with learning disabilities and those who need moderate behavioral support.

ELITE PRIVATE SCHOOLS

$37,000+

Tuition at St. Georges Private School [23]

$3,000,000+

Yearly Public Subsidy [24]

$666,758

Yearly Property Tax Exemption (2025)

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- ***Cuts*** to **music and performing arts programs, athletics,** and **library services.**
- ***Cuts*** to **support staff for visually impaired students,** and students who are too sick to go to school
- ***Cuts*** to **student safety** and **mental health programs**
- **School closures,** and **sell-offs of school board land.**

3.8 Make The City Safe for *Everyone*

- **Prioritize city planning and infrastructure upgrades for climate events and earthquakes to save lives** and prevent future disasters.
- **Stop intimate partner violence in Vancouver by Implementing the five calls to action for municipalities of the Battered Women Support Services (BWSS),** including an Intimate Partner Violence task force, supporting community-based victim services and transition houses, and strengthing local data collection on intimate partner violence.
- **Support infrastructure to reduce the risk of suicide,** like barriers on bridges and high-risk areas, and programs to intervene and support people in crisis.
- **Address mental health and addictions by expanding access to voluntary and compassionate treatment,** frontline services, and fighting against stigma for drug use and poverty.

Ken Sim and ABC's Safety Failures

- **Cut the Sex Worker Safety Planning Position** created following the 2012 Pickton Commission
- **Defunded life-saving Cooling Kits** for heat waves
- **Slashed climate retrofit funding** and the sustainability department
- Repeatedly **voted against road safety motions** that would save lives.

- **Challenge the legal structures which handcuff the city to unelected police boards,** and push for democratic community oversight and an **audit of the VPD.**

A 2025 report by Rise Women's Legal Centre showed that domestic abusers are **weaponizing Vancouver's housing crisis** to keep women trapped in violent homes. [25]

- **Fight to address the root causes** of survival crime, mental health and addictions, and homelessness.
- **Make Vancouver a Restorative Justice City** by endorsing and funding the Restorative City framework.
- Address the overdose crisis by supporting evidence-based interventions including **drug testing, safe supply programs, and supervised consumption sites.**
- **Restore the sex worker safety planning position** that was cut by Ken Sim and ABC, and support front-line services that save lives and protect vulnerable people from violence and exploitation.
- **Expand support for the safety of those working in the sex trade** and create policy that ensures sex workers are able to work in safe environments, including the right to safe exit from the industry.
- **Remove mental health calls from VPD priorities, and distribute funding toward community safety programs for acute mental health crises like peer-assisted care teams (PACTs).** We can reduce costs and free up funds for vital public service by providing alternatives to police as first responders.
- **Establish community safety programs to steward protests and community events with public safety captains**, without inflating VPD budgets with overtime and overpolicing.

- **Reduce pedestrian fatalities in Vancouver** by taking actions that save lives, including:
  - Speed limit reductions on high-risk streets.
  - Road upgrades and permanent school zones.
  - Supporting a protected bike lane on Broadway.
  - Improving and re-painting pedestrian crossings, and funding curb cuts.
  - Tackling ultra-bright headlights that increase road risk.
  - Expand protected left hand turn infrastructure, starting in areas of greatest need.

COPE Wins: Ultra-bright Headlights

In 2026, Sean Orr moved a motion to **challenge the prevalence of ultra-bright headlights**, sparking a Transport Canada consultation that received almost 380,000 responses. [26]

The motion went to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) where it was **endorsed by cities across Canada.**

3.9 Don't Force A.I. on Vancouver

- **Pause the rollout of AI Large Language Models (LLMs) in Vancouver Schools, and engage and consult with parents and stakeholders to implement a technology audit to create protocols and guidelines to address the following risks:**
  - Safety and privacy for students.
  - Impact of AI usage on learning outcomes and mental health.
  - Transparent and robust consultation with stakeholders and community on AI usage and adoption in schools.
  - Impact on climate and the environment of AI usage and adoption
  - Lack of student and staff AI usage policies and procedures
  - Impact on the use of and validity of results when AI is used for public engagement and consultation.
- **Establish AI governance policies for managers, staff, and elected officials to ensure that public data and data about citizens is never used to train AI or LLM systems owned by tech billionaires**, and ensure that any partnerships the city enters into with external companies protect the integrity and privacy of personal data.
- **Oppose the use of AI to automate jobs, lay off workers, and undermine labour rights.**
- **Oppose the creation and operation of urban data centers for Artificial Intelligence ("AI Factories") in Vancouver,** and fight for robust regulatory frameworks to ensure that any AI data centres are accountable for water use, energy impacts, noise, and public health concerns before any project goes forward.

- Vancouver has the **highest per-capita population of artists out of any major city** in Canada [27]
- British Columbia's cultural sector generated **over $11 billion in GDP and 129,000+ jobs** in 2024. [28]
- **Arts funding in Vancouver has only received modest increases below inflation**, putting Arts & Culture programming at risk.

3.10 Keep the Arts in Vancouver

- **Reduce speculative pressure on artist spaces and protect Vancouver's arts** through a **Cultural Land Trust.**
- **A Vancouver Arts and Cultural Spaces Strategy** that leverages city-owned land for galleries, venues, theatres, and rehearsal spaces, and encourages the use of vacant commercial spaces for performance and arts.
- **Create a Vancouver Arts, Culture, and Creative City Navigator** that can support and aid arts organizations, festivals, and venues, and facilitate Vancouver's Arts & Culture goals.
- **Boost operating grants** for Vancouver's arts sector, and then tie them to inflation. Explore the creation of a municipal arts endowment, or a dedicated tax revenue stream, for long-term stability in arts funding.
- **End the crackdown on DIY arts venues,** and encourage and support independent artist-run nightlife as part of Vancouver's cultural scene.
- **Levy an empty business tax for industrial and commercial spaces,** with a program to encourage the use of vacant spaces for performance and art spaces.
- **Bring art and music into public spaces** by expanding access to covered bandstands, encourage street-corner performers, and support free and low-cost festivals.
- **Support the needs of our museums, galleries, civic theatres, and cultural amenities,** and offer free access through the Public Library or Leisure Access Pass.
- **Protect the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and work with them to advance the arts in Vancouver.** We will work to distribute power to the people.

3.11 Fight for a Just Vancouver

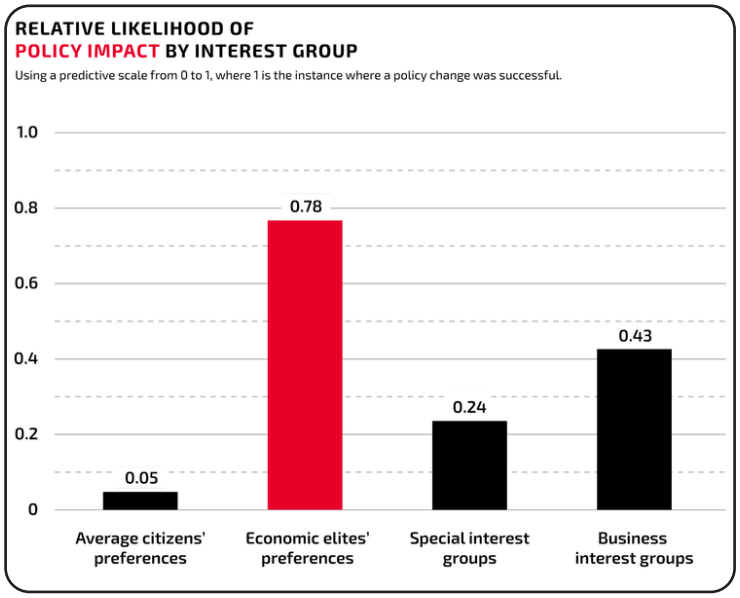
- **Use all options available to the city, and pressure all other levels of government, to tax wealth in Vancouver,** through measures like a Mansion Tax, or progressive taxation of property values, and work to establish new powers to target those who can afford to pay for revenues to fund our public services and affordable housing.
- **Restore the city's living wage policy** and ensure that Vancouver is an ethical employer.
- **Support our pools, recreation facilities, and public services with the funding they need.** The annual Vancouver police budget has been increased by over $100 million under Ken Sim, while at the same time he's cutting green bin pickups, there are huge lineups at the city's pools, and planned community centre upgrades are being halted. Let's prioritize and invest in people and in the social infrastructure that every neighbourhood needs and deserves.
- **Apply a disability justice lens** to city policies, systems, services, funding, and structures to make Vancouver a welcoming place for people with disabilities.
- **Oppose privatization and public-private-partnerships (PPPs),** and work to bring city contractors in as unionized city employees.
- **Establish a "too hot to work" by-law** that establishes safe temperatures in workplaces, including kitchens.
- **Make Vancouver an Apartheid-Free Community** and join Burnaby in signing on to the Apartheid-Free Communities pledge.

COPE Wins: The Empty Homes Tax

In our 2014 campaign, COPE's mayoral candidate Meena Wong proposed an empty homes tax to target speculators in our housing market.

The policy was copied by almost every other party in the city, and implemented successfully in 2017.

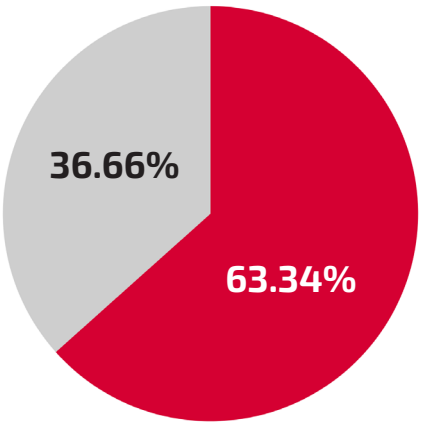
- **Make Vancouver a real city of reconciliation,** and foster positive collaborative relationships with host nations and under-served urban indigenous populations. Address anti-Indigenous racism and bias in institutions, support the development of Indigenous land trusts, and work with host nations and urban Indigenous groups to ensure Indigenous voices are always reflected at City Hall.
- **Rename Dunsmuir Street to Ginger Goodwin Street,** and review the city's street names, statues, and plazas for names which are contrary to Vancouver's values.
- **Speak out for global justice, and stand in solidarity with working-class people at home and abroad,** and unwaveringly commit to the principles of peace, social justice, and the rights of all people to self-determination.
- **Push back against hate. Fight for justice.** Vancouver is for everyone. COPE will always stand up for people that are targeted and scapegoated. COPE will fight back against transphobia, homophobia, misogyny, antisemitism, ableism, islamophobia, racism, and all forms of discrimination and exclusion.



[29]

3.12 Take Democracy Back from the Billionaires

- **Oppose the erosion of democracy in the era of Trump.** Instead of abolishing the elected Park Board, or cutting tools for community engagement without suitable replacements, we need to use Vancouver's advisory committees, public hearings, citizens assemblies, participatory budgeting, and referendum to meaningfully engage with - and be accountable to - the public.
- **Establish a "Democracy Dollars" program to even the playing field and allow poor and middle-income people to have a bigger influence on politics,** inspired by a similar program in Seattle, WA. Residents can request a $25 voucher to donate to local political parties or candidates from public funds, and counter the disproportionate power of the super-rich.
- **Expand the right to vote for all residents, but end non-resident voting.** In Vancouver, property owners who don't live here can vote in our elections. But Permanent Residents can't. We'll change that, and expand voting rights to everyone above the age of 16.
- **Make it easier to vote by making public transit free on election days,** and ensure there are sufficient polling stations, including mobile voting stations, and accessibility options for seniors and people with disabilities.
- **A ranked ballot for Mayor, starting in 2030.** During negotiations between progressive parties around the mayoral race, COPE secured a commitment from all progressive parties to fight for a ranked choice ballot for Mayor, like in New York and San Francisco. We'll push the provincial government to give cities full control over our own electoral systems.
- **Fight for proportional representation, ranked ballots, and wards.** We need an electoral system that balances regional representation, proportionality, and voter expression. COPE members have endorsed the model used in Portland, OR with multi-member wards in a proportional representation system.
- **A citizens assembly on electoral reform.** Ultimately, residents should have the final say in our electoral system, not just political parties. We'll convene a citizens assembly to produce a model for Vancouver that achieves our goal of fair elections.



In 2022, **Ken Sim and ABC received less than 37% of total votes cast** across Council, School Board, and Park Board, but got a ruling majority on **every board.** [30]

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