



# 2014 Draft Platform

*As recommended by COPE's Policy and Constitution Committee.  
To be voted on by the COPE membership on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014.*

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## 1. Housing

1.1 On its first day in office, COPE will declare a “state of emergency” to solve the affordable housing crisis. COPE will maximize existing powers and proactively pursue new powers, resources, and alliances.

1.2 COPE will end the influence of real estate corporations at City Hall and work to ban corporate donations.

1.3 COPE will create a Vancouver Housing Authority that will:

1.3.1 Follow the ten recommendations made in the 98 page report published in April 2014 titled *Ending the Housing Crisis: International best-practices for creating a Vancouver Housing Authority* (see table 1).

1.3.2 Have developer powers to construct housing, including low-end and regular market housing, to generate surplus revenues and to achieve significant market share to undercut monopoly developer profits.

1.3.3 Make use of the strong private market and direct CACs and DLCs toward social and affordable housing.

1.3.4 COPE will seek an amendment to the Vancouver Charter to implement a "luxury housing tax" of only \$1,000 for each \$1M in assessed value in excess of \$1.5M. In the interim COPE will implement a property tax increase upon securing any necessary amendments to the City Charter to give full rebates/grants for home with assessed values below \$1.5M. All revenues will be directed toward the provision of city-owned social housing.

1.3.5 Use Vancouver’s Property Endowment Fund’s annual returns to purchase properties for Housing Authority housing projects.

1.3.6 Use increased lobbying power and revenue to leverage additional matching funds from higher levels of government.

1.3.7 Seek ongoing capital investment through partnership with the British Columbia Municipal Pension Plan, including using the City’s Pension Plan capital reserves.

1.3.8 Build 800 units of city-run social housing per year, including at least 400 units inside the Downtown Eastside to replace private Single Room Occupancy Hotels.

Table 1: 10 Principles for a Housing Authority with Teeth

**COPE’s Housing Authority**

**1) Build housing and don’t rely on private developers:** The Housing Authority will have developer powers to construct housing, including social housing, public rental housing, as well as regular market housing to generate surplus revenues, and achieve significant market share to break the existing monopoly power that private developers wield.

**2) Prioritize social housing for those most in need:** Replace substandard privately-owned hotels, and prioritize social housing units for Indigenous People, migrants, women, trans people, seniors, youth, people with mental health and physical disabilities including HIV/AIDs, and vulnerable low-income people who are disproportionately at risk of homelessness and hidden homelessness.

**3) Clear and Consistent Definitions of affordable and social housing:** The Housing Authority should operate under clear and consistent definitions of affordable, market, and social housing. Affordable housing

should be defined as 30% of household income and should be targeted to lower-income households, and less in rapidly gentrifying neighbourhoods.

**4) High quality housing:** Ensure high quality of design, maintenance, and front-line service. In line with the New York model, public housing should be constructed and maintained at levels comparable to, or better than, the private market. Follow Vienna's practice of high environmental design.

**5) Monitor entire housing supply:** The Housing Authority should administer a landowner and landlord registry to keep inventory on all types of housing in the city and take measures to protect the city's affordable housing stock.

**6) Housing as Public Good:** Public housing provision should be accessible to a large cross-section of the population. This will increase public buy-in and reduce stigmatization, as in Hong Kong, Singapore, Stockholm, and Vienna.

**7) Democratic governance:** Ensure resident participation in Housing Authority decision-making, independent from real estate interests. Enable a tenant union inspired by the Swedish Union of Tenants.

**8) Actively lobby higher levels of government:** Organize locally and nationally to aggressively lobby all levels of government to fund social and affordable housing. Lobbying efforts can be enhanced by using new revenue sources to leverage matching funds, and supported by tenant boards or unions.

**9) Public ownership of land:** Control of city land-banks should be centralized under the Housing Authority. This is also an opportunity for the Housing Authority to be at the forefront of building relations of solidarity and urban land sovereignty with Indigenous people,

communities and Nations.

**10) Funding Mechanisms:** We have identified a series of potential funding mechanisms, including building new revenue-generating properties, as well as clear direction of development contributions, land-lease revenues and other commercial taxes, and progressive property taxes into producing city-owned public housing assets.

Table 2a: Revenue Sources for COPE’s Housing Authority

Revenue Source	COPE will	Annual Target
Build revenue-generating housing	Ensure Housing Authority has developer powers to construct housing, including low-end and regular market housing, to generate surplus revenues and to achieve significant market share to undercut monopoly developer profits.	50M (based on av of 500 units/yr)
Developer contributions (CACs and DCLs)	Make use of the strong private market and direct CACs and DLCs toward the social and affordable housing.	50M
Luxury Housing Tax	Implement a luxury housing tax through a Charter amendment and/or property tax increase supplemented with grant/rebates for value of homes under \$1.5M.	35M
Property Endowment Fund (PEF):	Use PEF annual returns to purchase properties for HA projects.	10M
Lobbying	Use increased lobbying power and revenue to leverage additional matching funds from higher levels of government.	25M

Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) funds	Seek ongoing capital investment through partnership with the BC MPP, including using the City's Pension Plan capital reserves.	NA
		Total: 170M

Table 2b: Expenditures for COPE's Housing Authority

Housing Authority Expenditure	COPE will	Target annual cost:
Build city-run social housing	Build 800 units of city-run social housing per year, half of it inside DTES to replace private SROs.	160M (based on average \$200,000 per unit construction cost)

1.4 COPE will replace 4,000 units of privately owned low-income hotel rooms in the Downtown Eastside with quality social housing over the next ten years. Social housing will be affordable to low-income residents.

1.5 COPE will implement an immediate moratorium on condo development in the DTES and stop gentrification and displacement.

1.6 COPE will approve at least twice as much floor area of new rental housing construction in its first term of office as City Council approved between 2008 and 2014, in accordance with NSV Principals 4 and 5, and maintaining existing Cityplan and relevant zoning, and provided that if existing low income housing is demolished it must be replaced by low income housing in the same neighbourhood.

1.7 COPE will increase rental-housing construction enough to ensure that the residential rental vacancy rate is at least 2% by 2018, and the median real rent paid by tenant households is lower in 2018 than in 2014.

1.8 COPE will use the city's demolition and renovation permitting power to stop renovictions.

1.9 COPE will seek to define Single Room Occupancy Hotel conversion to include raising rents above welfare- and pension-level shelter rates, and to increase SRO-conversion fees to those recommended by the Carnegie Community Action Project.

1.10 COPE will apply strict rent controls to all new large housing developments, using the City's zoning and housing agreement powers.

1.11 COPE will create and implement a Municipal Rent Control program to bring rents down across the City.

1.12 COPE will establish an elected Rent Control Board, with tenant representation and independence from the real estate industry.

1.13 COPE will work with other municipalities to advocate that the provincial government tie rent increases to the rental unit, not to the tenancy, and implement a province-wide rent-freeze.

1.14 COPE will create a Landowner and Landlord Registry database that will:

1.14.1 Register and License Landowners and Landlords,

1.14.2 List all rental units, rents, and rent increases,

1.14.3 Track all health, safety, maintenance, and tenancy disputes,

1.14.4 Be funded, in full or part, by Registration and Licensing fees,

1.14.5 Create incentives for property owners to register and rent-out suites and rooms legally,

1.14.6 Monitor and apply penalties for vacant or underutilized properties,

1.15 COPE will enforce and strengthen municipal housing maintenance standards. This includes enforcing existing minimum fines and powers to seek injunctions for neglect and disinvestment. It also includes proactive investigations of maintenance, up to and including seizing rental properties that fall behind on bylaw fine payments.

1.16 COPE will support and fund citywide Tenant Unions.

1.17 COPE will make the enforcement of provincial and federal squatting laws the lowest policing priority and that all municipal discriminatory squatting bylaws, including the existing Political Structures By-law, be abandoned. COPE will establish health and safety supports to squatters in abandoned government-owned buildings and properties.

1.18 COPE will create a Rental Housing Ombudsperson.

1.19 COPE will ensure 1:1 replacement at all 96 truly affordable units at Heather Place at their current rents,

a) Allowing for only an annual increase as proposed by the residential tenancy branch upon re-entry to the development.

b) All current tenants to be provided equivalent or better accommodation within their community until their development is completed.

## **2. Transit**

2.1 COPE will work to reduce transit fares, with a view to eliminating them within 10 to 15 years and issuing community transit passes.

2.2 COPE will work with Translink to make transit more accessible, especially to riders that face physical and economic barriers.

2.3 COPE will pursue lower-cost, more flexible bus or light rail transit service enhancements, especially along the Broadway corridor, in preference to high-cost, long-delayed, and inappropriate subway-based systems.

2.4 COPE will insist that the Translink board be democratically elected.

2.5 COPE will use best practices, proven precedents, and intelligent planning to create a strong and cost-effective transit system that will serve both existing demand and expected growth.

2.6 COPE will ensure public consultation and transparent planning for all major projects.

2.7 COPE will advocate for the reduction of excessive executive and management salaries at Translink to control costs.

2.8 COPE will dedicate parking fees and violation fine revenue to provision of free shuttle bus services.

2.9 COPE will advocate to increase HandyDART service, and make HandyDART a direct subsidiary of Translink rather than contracting it out to for-profit operators.

2.10 COPE will oppose demolition of the Georgia/Venables Viaduct structures unless realistic alternatives are in place.

2.11 COPE will Implement an identifying card or sticker for riders with disabilities to display when using transit.

2.12 COPE will re-examine the Point Grey Road closure with regard to process, cost, and efficacy.

### **3. Labour and Living Wage**

3.1 COPE will propose an amendment to the Vancouver Charter to confer powers upon the City allowing it to set a municipal minimum wage for the City of Vancouver at \$15/hr indexed to inflation, with the aim of closing the gap between a minimum and a living wage (that is currently closer to \$19/hr).

3.2 Advocate for increasing the minimum wage to \$15/hr province-wide which would place a minimum wage worker just above the poverty line – in solidarity with other municipalities and in line with recommendations from Raise the Rates.

3.3 COPE will ensure that direct and indirect employees of the city are paid at a living wage.

3.4 COPE Work on a viable model to implement a Guaranteed Liveable Income, which we would be available to all citizens, permanent residents, and refugees, is structured to recognize family composition and special needs, such as medical expenses, and is set high enough to foster social participation and ensure that everyone has access to food, clothing, and housing.

3.5 COPE will not contract out any Vancouver City Services, nor enter into Public Private Partnerships.

3.6 COPE will ensure that any building trades working for the City of Vancouver or working on City contracts must have their TQ, and City inspectors must check the tickets of workers and record ticket numbers.

3.7 COPE will ensure that all contractors working on City contracts must be Licensed Contractors, and that every licensed business post Employment Standards in the workplace.

#### **4. Education**

4.1 COPE will insist on sufficient funding to allow smaller class sizes at both the elementary and secondary level. COPE will insist that the provincial government restore sufficient local bargaining to allow school board to negotiate directly with the teachers' unions to establish appropriate, flexible, and meaningful class size and composition limits for Vancouver students.

4.2 COPE will advocate changing the current provincial funding model in order to prioritize funding for public education and eliminate funding for private education.

4.3 COPE will not be complicit or co-operate in further cuts to the public education system in Vancouver.

4.4 COPE will Implement a *Students' Environmental Bill of Rights*, which will:

4.4.1 Support youth participation and initiatives in the development of green programs. Develop a targeted Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Program.

4.4.2 Support the establishment of school gardens where possible.

4.4.3 Establish a VSB Bike Advisory Committee.

4.4.4 Lobby for funding to build/upgrade schools that are green and meet silver/gold LEEDS standards (e.g. heating and solar).

4.4.5 Work closely with Toxic Free Canada to remove toxic paints and cleaning products from schools and to ensure a fragrance and allergy free environment.

4.4.6 Encourage and facilitate the use of alternative methods of transportation by staff, parents and students.

4.5 COPE will strengthen school facilities by developing a district approach to protect and improve neighbourhood schools, including daycare/after school care space, gyms and activity rooms that meet the needs of the school community, and will lobby for school playground funding to remove and replace unsafe playground equipment. (i.e. secure and boost the Annual Facility Grant).

4.6 COPE will pressure the provincial government to address the need for earthquake amelioration of schools, especially those with construction that is known to be a hazard.

4.7 COPE will adhere to an open, honest and transparent process of consultation. This will be achieved by actively listening to and gaining an understanding, of what is important to our stakeholders.

4.8 COPE will reach out to the communities it represents by rotating board meetings in the communities/ neighbourhoods that it serves.

4.9 COPE will continue to focus on the need to advocate for public education by promoting, advancing the engagement with parents (including Parent Advisory Committees), unions, employee groups, and the “village”.

4.10 COPE will develop policies that ensure that foods served in Vancouver Schools are healthy, and will visit the issue of junk food in schools and look into ways of implementing and coordinating other food policy programs with Vancouver Schools.

4.11 COPE will see the classroom and services to the classroom as its first priority, and will aim to support new teachers through mentoring programs.

4.12 COPE will review existing policies and develop new policies that have the objective of promoting inclusive, accepting and safe school environments for all students.

4.13 COPE will work with our valiant Public Education unions to ensure that the 2014 Supreme Court ruling that Bill 22 is unconstitutional be effectively implemented in Vancouver. COPE celebrates the 2014 Supreme Court of Canada ruling that:

a. Bill 22 (passed in March 2012) is unconstitutional. Collective Agreement provisions removed in 2002 are restored effective immediately,

b. The BC Government was fined for not complying with the Court’s 2011 ruling (that Bills 27 and 28 (passed in 2001) were unconstitutional

and interfered with Teachers' collective bargaining rights.. and giving the government 12 months to address repercussions of the decision).

The Supreme Court of Canada ruling means the BC Government needs to:

- a. Reinvest the necessary funding in Public Education. BC's per-student funding is currently \$1000 below the national average (only PEI's funding is worse),
- b. Restore our smaller class sizes and specialist teacher ratios. BC's educator-student ratio is the worst in the country.  
Rebuild the public education system
- c. BC needs to turn around this situation and start reinvesting to rebuild the kind of excellent public education system BC Parents expect for their children.

## **5. Parks**

5.1 COPE will ensure that park space expands to meet the needs of Vancouver's growing population by committing to the Park Board's policy of 1.1 hectare of new park space per 1000 new residents, and the "5 minute walk from a park" criteria. This will be applied to new developments, as well as to historically deficient neighbourhoods.

5.2 COPE will ensure that community centres and recreation facilities are upgraded and expanded to meet the needs of the growing population, and address the backlog of inadequate and deteriorating facilities that already exists, and will engage the public, including its partner community associations, to establish a timeline and priorities as goals in the capital planning cycle.

5.3 COPE will address the shortage and enhance the accessibility of washrooms and water fountains (for both people and dogs) by making these a priority in the Park Board's Capital Plan.

5.4 COPE will consult with the affected communities to identify what constitutes adequate replacements for Vancouver's lost outdoor pools (Hastings, Marpole-Oakridge, Sunset, Mt Pleasant) and deteriorating or closed wading pools, and to identify gaps in summer aquatic opportunities. A rebuild of Mount Pleasant outdoor pool will be given priority because it has been approved in the Master Plan for Mount Pleasant Community Park for "when funding becomes available."

5.5 COPE will ensure more free programs and use of facilities for youth.

5.6 COPE will recognize the W2 Community Centre at Woodward's as a community service delivery point, waive the amenity fee, and provide operating assistance to ensure its sustainability.

5.7 COPE will look at the 519 Community Centre in Toronto as an example of delivering services to different and diverse communities in Vancouver, and work in partnership with different cultural communities in Vancouver and in collaboration with other service agencies to identify City-owned and other spaces for this purpose. COPE will support the current public consultation towards an LGBTQ community centre in the West End, and suggests the 519 Community Centre model as an example to consider as these consultations move forward.

5.8 COPE will establish a community centre at Hogan's Alley as a memorial to the lost community which once lived there, with a mandate to both host cultural activities and provide a place for new immigrant communities.

5.9 COPE will consult with the public and work with the employees who maintain our parks to identify means of reducing, reusing, and recycling waste.

5.10 COPE will work with City staff, with input from the public, to identify parks which suffer from invasive species, establish a plan for their removal, and engage and educate the public to prevent the further spread of invasive species.

5.11 COPE will consult with the public and City staff to identify appropriate land and resources to establish urban food forests, including design, site preparation, planting, and maintenance. All food produced in urban food forests will be entirely public and both harvested and consumed by Vancouver's residents on a basis of mutual trust. Both native food forests and food trees from around the world, representing Vancouver's diverse communities, will be established. The focus will be on community building and education, including soil building, fruit tree care, seed saving, bee-keeping, composting, safety, and identification of unfamiliar plants.

5.12 COPE will make accessibility by walking, cycling and public transit a priority when siting new recreation facilities and parks.

5.13 COPE will restore the free shuttle in Stanley Park, to be paid for from parking fees, and work with City Council and local labour unions to extend the shuttle along the waterfront from Crab Portside Park to Spanish Banks.

5.14 COPE will encourage arts and culture groups in the city to have input into the design of new and renovated parks and facilities.

5.15 COPE will work with its unionized employees to identify budget deficiencies without laying off workers.

5.16 COPE will consult with City staff and volunteers to define the role of each, recognizing both the scope of work done by staff and the value of community engagement in enriching our parks and recreation system.

5.17 COPE will work with colleagues at City Council to institute a living wage for restaurant and contracted work.

5.18 COPE will give priority to services being done in-house, and where this is not feasible, award contracts to local business, and avoid corporatizing services in Vancouver's parks and recreations facilities.

5.19 COPE will work with its colleagues at City Council to adequately fund parks and recreation services in both the Operating Budget and the building of new and renovated facilities in the Capital Budget. COPE will establish a mechanism to ensure that adequate funding of Parks & Recreation services and infrastructure be sustained.

5.20 COPE will work with the public to establish more comprehensive public consultation, which must include face-to face interaction in addition to web-based questionnaires and forums. In particular, COPE will work to engage residents of Vancouver who have barriers to participation, such as low income, physical or mental disabilities, a first language other than English, or cultural inhibitions. COPE will ensure that public consultation is conducted with respect by all parties.

5.21 COPE will restore the practice of holding some of the Park Board's regular meetings in venues throughout the city, especially in community centres, with an opportunity for residents of each community to tell the Park Board their issues and concerns at the beginning of each meeting.

5.22 COPE will revise the current committee system so that committee(s) meet at least a week prior to the regular Park Board meeting. This will ensure that Parks Commissioners have sufficient time to consider the

views of the public, and can direct staff to make revisions, if necessary. It will also enable the Park Board to hold committee meetings at different venues, whenever an agenda item has a significant impact on a particular community.

5.23 COPE will empower neighbourhoods to participate in decision-making by conducting forums in the community at which residents can raise issues and have input in prioritizing both operating and capital expenditures.

5.24 COPE will ensure that the people of Vancouver and residents of the Hastings Park area in particular have meaningful access to and input into decision-making at Hastings Park.

5.25 COPE will advocate for a plebiscite to be placed on the ballot in November 2014 on whether Vancouverites support the keeping of captive whales and dolphins in the Vancouver Aquarium's facilities in Stanley Park. Failing this, COPE will continue to press for a plebiscite as soon as possible after the 2014 election in order to inform the review of the Aquarium's lease in 2015. If the results of this plebiscite oppose keeping cetaceans in captivity, a COPE Park Board will work with the Aquarium to establish a plan for phase-out by 2018 at the latest, with the phase-out to be completed no later than the end of the Aquarium's lease in 2029.

5.26 COPE will recognize the long history of Community Centre Associations (CCAs) in Vancouver, and their crucial role in creating an effective grassroots decision-making process.

5.27 COPE will oppose pooling revenues as a means for Vancouver City Council to have total fiscal control over the Park Board, and to potentially tap the revenues generated by the Community Centres.

5.28 COPE will support an independent and elected Park Board.

5.29 COPE will support an overall increase to the global budget received by the Park Board from the City of Vancouver, and the revocation of the \$10 million in cuts to Park Board funding from 2009 – 2012.

5.30 COPE will strengthen the Park Board's partnership with existing CCAs, who effectively represent their neighbourhoods and consult with their membership to identify and address community needs.

5.31 COPE will recognize and promote the value of union representation and Vancouver's civic unions such as CUPE, who represent the vast majority of Park Board employees. COPE will support the expansion of the unionized workforce to include Community Association employees who fall within the CUPE/Park Board jurisdiction and are committed to working with the Unions, as needed. COPE recognizes that achieving this could increase Park Board expenses and re-affirms the importance of restoring Park Board funding.

5.32 COPE will ensure that any review of services to avoid overlap of Park Board and Community Centre Association programs will be done in partnership with CCAs, so that these community organizations can continue to provide unique and localized programs that meet the diverse needs of Vancouver's many citizens.

5.33 COPE will ensure equity throughout Park Board and Community Centre Associations services and programs, citywide.

5.34 COPE will encourage the Park Board to work respectfully with its community association partners to help foster better relations and cooperation with the goal of enhancing jointly provided services.

5.35 COPE will negotiate with Community Centre Associations to identify a fiscal framework which will allow them to become Living Wage employers.

5.36 COPE will work cooperatively with other partners in the community such as the Library Board, School Board, and non-profit organizations to foster improved services, integration, and empowerment of the diverse residents of Vancouver.

5.37 COPE will provide continued support and recognition of community volunteers who are essential to fulfilling COPE's mission of creating a Vancouver for everyone.

## **6. Aboriginal**

6.1 COPE will recognize act on addressing the needs and priorities of First Nations, Inuit and Metis people, Native Community organizations and the Idle No More movement.

6.2 COPE will participate in popular education and awareness on the issue of residential school redress in collaboration with indigenous organizations.

6.3 COPE will advocate for, in consultation with Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, representation, voice, and vote from each of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations on Vancouver City Council. COPE will support thorough dialogue with indigenous people, communities, and nations to mutually determine implementation of this policy.

6.4 COPE WILL create an inventory of colonial place names which carry an inappropriate legacy and prepare replacement names in consultation with Urban Aboriginal and Indigenous organizations, Musqueam Squamish and Tsleil Waututh Nations

6.5 COPE will advocate the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) by the City of Vancouver.

## **7. Environment and Public Health**

7.1 COPE will adopt the Kyoto protocols and all subsequent international agreements that are designed to balance ecological and economic necessities. In doing so, a COPE Council will recognize the limits to growth and the need for concrete action.

7.2 COPE will collaborate with residents and other stakeholders and governments on the reallocation of civic resources and implementation of zoning allowances to increase and encourage food production.

7.3 COPE will advocate for the creation of *Community Food Exchange Markets*, for food distribution and community building.

7.4 COPE will protect and conserve Vancouver's water resources, ensure public ownership and operation of water resources, and secure funding to renew existing infrastructure.

7.5 COPE will ensure that, despite cuts to environmental monitoring and research by the federal government, air and water quality are being monitored, including levels and types of radiation, carbon dioxide and monoxide, and greenhouse gasses.

7.6 COPE Council will address Fukushima Seepage by:

- a. monitoring radiation types and levels,
- b. supporting research and an ongoing public forum of experts outlining the situation and courses of action,
- c. informing the public of the situation and solutions to protect health
- d. ensuring distribution of appropriate remediation.

7.7 COPE will support an ongoing public forum on air and water quality, and inform the public of the current state of the environment and potential effects on public health in Vancouver as well as performing research on solutions to climate change.

7.8 COPE will review the bi-weekly garbage pickup program.

7.9 COPE will establish designated separate smoking areas with shelters so that smokers can stay sheltered from rain, and non-smokers can be separated from second-hand smoke.

7.10 COPE will expand the City of Vancouver's Ethical Purchasing Policy to include a ban on genetically modified products, open net salmon farming, and other products that do not reflect sustainable resource use.

7.11 *COPE will oppose the expansion of gambling.*

***The Policy and Constitution recommends the above policy to the membership based on previous platform; this was not approved by membership at the 2014 policy convention.***

7.12 *COPE will use the City's powers to persuade the BC government to speed the renovation and expansion of St. Paul's Hospital and to improve access to emergency and urgent care throughout Vancouver.*

***The Policy and Constitution Committee recommends the above policy to the membership based on an amalgamation of previous platforms; this motion was not approved by the membership at the 2014 Policy Convention.***

7.13 COPE will update and implement the Cool Vancouver Climate Change Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

***The Policy and Constitution Committee recommends the above policy to the membership; this motion was not approved by the membership at the 2014 policy convention.***

7.14 COPE WILL enable municipal officials to speak out against health privatization and demand adequate funding of our public health care system in every community. Municipal officials can use their zoning powers and public outreach processes to foster the development of not-for-profit health care instead of private for-profit facilities. Vancouver will stand in solidarity with counterparts across the province and request that the Union of BC Municipalities call on the provincial government to take specific measures to stop the growth of private for-profit medical facilities.

7.15 COPE WILL lobby the Province of British Columbia to:

7.15.1 Establish a moratorium on any further expansion of private, for-profit surgical and MRI/CT clinics,

7.15.2 Require an end to public funding of for-profit clinics, including the contracting-out of day surgeries and the provision of Health Authority contracts to for-profit clinics,

7.15.3 Require full accountability and transparency on the part of for-profit clinics by ensuring that they submit to all oversight and regulatory mechanisms currently applied to public facilities operating under the BC Hospital Act; and

7.15.4 Expand public capacity by requiring the development of publicly funded and administered outpatient facilities,

7.15.5 Require UBCM to continue to research and monitor the threat to universal public health care posed by the operations of private, for-profit surgical and MRI/CT facilities in its member communities.

7.16 COPE will support Vancouver becoming a Blue Community and promote adoption of this resolution; supports public and non-profit ownership and operation of water and wastewater treatment services in our community; and will lobby the provincial and federal governments to fulfill their responsibility to support municipal infrastructure by investing in a national water infrastructure fund that would address the growing need to renew existing water and wastewater infrastructure and build new systems; and will forward this resolution to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities for circulation to all of its members.

## **8. Sanctuary City**

8.1 COPE will ensure that Vancouver becomes a Sanctuary City, where all people, regardless of status, are free to access essential services without fear of detention and deportation.

8.2 COPE will neither co-operate nor be complicit in the agenda of federal immigration authorities to unjustly and inhumanely detain and deport migrants, and will ensure access to services without fear for all residents of Vancouver.

8.3 Through Sanctuary City, COPE will:

8.3.1 Enable access to pre-existing basic services for all Vancouver residents, regardless of status,

8.3.2 Oppose the use of municipal funds, resources, and workers, including the Vancouver Police Department, in enforcing federal immigration laws,

8.3.3 Support the regularization of all non-status persons, and put an end to detentions and deportations that often result from residents accessing basic services, such as transit,

8.3.4 Establish a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy for service providers to ensure no disclosure of immigration information to federal immigration authorities and provide access to services without fear.

8.4 COPE will actively challenge anti-migrant depictions of precarious status individuals as potential threats to the city and will support organizations that provide services that respond to the unique needs of migrants and those with precarious status in Vancouver.

## **9. Police**

9.1 Public accountability and independent oversight:

9.1.1 COPE will ensure that the VPD complaints process will be monitored by a completely independent body, with a proper budget and no reporting obligations to the VPD.

9.1.2 COPE will create a civilian-run police complaints system empowered to conduct investigations and order police to co-operate with enforcement decisions.

9.1.3 COPE will also explore ways to support third-party independent, community-led police oversight organizations.

## 9.2 Reducing and reallocating police spending:

9.2.1 COPE supports a platform of returning to pre-2008 levels of police financing, and possibly lower depending on the results of a municipal “Budget Priorities” participatory community consultation process. The purpose of this policy is to transfer finances away from policing and into housing, social services and other essential community initiatives.

9.2.2. COPE will reallocate police resources to ensure full and proper investigation of complaints of male violence against women, in keeping with the full recommendations of the Murdered and Missing Women’s Commission of Inquiry.

9.2.3 COPE supports community infrastructures and organizations that help individuals address systemic violence in their communities without sole recourse to police and government authorities;

## 9.3 More training, better education:

9.3.1 Under COPE, the VPD will engage in regular and frequent mandatory training sessions on current and historic colonial violence in Vancouver, particularly addressing systemic misogyny and racism; COPE WILL support VPD training session that include the voices and priorities of marginalized groups, including but not limited to Sikh, Muslim, Black, Indigenous, First Nations, Metis, Inuit, transgender people, Queer people of colour and other racialized communities.

9.3.2 Under COPE, police will explicitly rely upon and incorporate learning from local grassroots organizations recognized as front-line experts in violence against women, including transgender women.

### 9.3 End targeting of marginalized groups and visible minorities

9.3.1 COPE will eliminate civic bylaws that police public space and function to criminalize the lives and bodies of survival street-level sex workers and other low-income and vulnerable people.

9.3.2 COPE will declare warrants for minor offenses unenforceable for those who are seeking police support against violence and abuse, following the recommendations of the Murdered and Missing Women's Commission of Inquiry;

9.3.3 COPE will ensure that the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) complaints process be monitored by a completely independent body, with no reporting obligations to the VPD.

9.3.4 COPE will make the enforcement of provincial and federal anti-squatting laws the lowest policing priority.

## 10. Drug Reform

10.1 COPE will reverse stalled progress since 2008 on drug reform and move strongly towards a municipal support for evidence-based harm reduction.

10.2 COPE will advocate integration of harm reduction services into the regional health care system and give real support to community-based, grassroots initiatives.

10.3 COPE will take a lead in the Canada-wide fight against the federal government's war on drugs and aggressive agenda of mandatory minimum sentencing. COPE will be a strong voice and lead by example by

directing the Vancouver Police Department to de-prioritize the enforcement of harmful federal drug laws.

10.4 COPE will lobby the federal government and join social movements calling for expanded harm reduction and a public system of regulated drug use.

10.5 COPE will advocate an on-demand treatment model, culturally specific treatment services, and other reforms emerging from organizations and affected communities.

10.6 COPE will ensure that Mental Health Act (MHA) definitions are not extended to drug addiction and drug use, and that the MHA is not used as a means to apprehend, certify, or displace marginalized populations. COPE will require the Vancouver Police Department to clarify the definition of harm to self, as defined under the MHA).

10.7 COPE WILL support the Sensible BC plan for a referendum on the question of decriminalizing of simple possession of cannabis and COPE WILL advocate and insist that Vancouver City Police not spend any time, money or resources on cases of simple possession of cannabis.

## **11. Living in Community**

11.1 COPE will adopt a harm reduction approach in regard to people engaged in the sex trade and advocate that the federal and provincial governments adopt similar legal frameworks.

11.2 COPE supports the right of all workers, including those employed in Vancouver's sex industry, to organize into unions, and to protection under Employment Standards, B.C. Labour Code, and the Worker's Compensation Act.

11.3 COPE will adopt the 2007 *Living in Community Action Plan* as the City's position on Balancing Perspectives on Vancouver's Sex Industry , and will implement core funding for the plan.

Living in Community: Summary of Action Plan

### Community Development

Action 1: Fund a community-based position to facilitate the implementation of the Living in Community Action Plan in collaboration with community members and groups, including sex workers, business, and governmental organizations.

Action 2: The City of Vancouver should commit resources equivalent to one full-time position to work with city departments and community members to develop a coordinated approach to issues associated with sex work.

Action 3: Strike a working group including representatives of city departments, provincial and federal governments, community members, and sex workers, to consider ways and means to ensure increased health and safety of sex workers and to prevent sexual exploitation.

### Education/Prevention

Action 4: Review, improve, and support existing programs that prevent sexual exploitation and recruitment, and develop a standardized curriculum for children, youth, and parents focusing on healthy sexuality, self-esteem, recruitment prevention, and healthy parenting.

Action 5: Sex worker organizations develop public education campaigns to educate the community about sexual exploitation of children and youth

and the realities of the sex industry, and work to improve media understanding and representation of sex work by the media.

Action 6: Promote public awareness of the educational and resource information contained in the Community Initiative for Health and Safety's On-line Toolkit.

Action 7: Develop a standardized curriculum and training to teach social work, law enforcement staff, and health and justice professionals how to work with sex workers effectively and respectfully.

Action 8: Establish ongoing partnerships between community-based organizations and academic institutions to ensure continuous feedback between research, policy, and practice.

#### Intervention and Harm Reduction

Action 9: Immediately develop and implement a strategy to ensure safety for street-based sex workers.

Action 10: Solidify sustainable funding for the Mobile Access Project Van, a partnership between PACE Society and The WISH Drop-in Centre Society, which provides overnight outreach and support services to women working on the street.

Action 11: Fund the expansion of service by the MAP Van (Mobile Access Project Van) to daytime hours to fulfill a Quick Response liaison and support role for sex workers and other community members impacted by the sex industry, to reduce reliance on enforcement and to promote health and safety in the community.

Action 12: Make communities visibly cleaner through various actions such as increasing street-cleaning crews and providing garbage cans, street lighting, and needle disposal services throughout the city.

Action 13: In collaboration with all stakeholders, develop and promote the implementation of health and safety guidelines and a code of conduct for all community members in neighbourhoods to reduce the negative impacts of sex work in a respectful, safe way.

Action 14: Strengthen the ability of sex worker organizations to provide crucial frontline support and outreach to marginalized sex worker populations.

Action 15: Redevelop SRO Hotels to provide safe, affordable and supportive housing to sex workers with a continuum of support services as required, starting with one hotel in 2007.

Action 16: Provide safehouses with adequate space for sexually exploited children and youth, and female, male, and transgendered sex workers.

Action 17: Provide a continuum of addiction withdrawal management services for female, male and transgendered sex workers, and sexually exploited children and youth, including dedicated counselling, detox, treatment, and recovery house services.

Action 18: Create and support innovative harm reduction programs designed specifically to support sex workers with substance addictions to increase their ability to make positive, healthy choices.

## Exiting

Action 19: Develop and fund a continuum of safe spaces providing appropriate treatment and supports to individuals who wish to exit the sex industry, at all stages of recovery.

Action 20: Expand employment opportunities in partnership with local business to provide training and ongoing support to individuals exiting sex work as well as assistance to businesses providing the opportunities.

## Legal Responses

Action 21: Support the call from sex workers for the development and implementation of a multi-stakeholder cooperative to provide safe indoor workspaces, a code of conduct, education, and training for the most vulnerable sex workers.

Action 22: Review City of Vancouver by-laws to ensure that they support the health and safety of sex workers in indoor venues; ensure access to these venues for community health and safety support workers.

Action 23: Review the elements of the justice system – enforcement, support and prosecution – to ensure that those who buy sex from children and youth and those who recruit children and youth are prosecuted.

Action 24: Move section 212.4 from the prostitution laws section of the Criminal Code to the violence/assault sections of the Criminal Code to demonstrate that children and youth under the age of 18 are not sex workers, but rather sexually exploited.

Action 25: Enforce Restraining Order 98 of the Child, Family and Community Services Act.

Action 26: Support the diversionary process when dealing with sex workers facing criminal charges.

Action 27: Strike a working group at the local level to review the impact of the enforcement of laws relating to prostitution and to explore changes to the current laws that would make communities healthier and safer.

## **12. Equity, Gender, Justice, Childcare**

12.1 COPE will develop and assess all policies with an equity lens, including consideration of the impact on women and girls.

12.2 COPE will, in full consultation with all people who have unique needs or who enjoy unique cultural characteristics, use the lenses of compassion, empathy, honor, and respect to develop, promote, and maintain appropriate facilities, services, and programs reflecting those needs and sensibilities where they may have been inadequately addressed.

12.3 COPE will advocate the parental rights of trans-men and trans-women.

*12.4 COPE will ensure that all residents of Vancouver have access to childcare by creating and implementing a city-wide childcare strategy. COPE supports the \$10/day Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning, as proposed by the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC. COPE will also use Council, Parks, and Schools resources and spaces toward the development of a universal childcare program.*

***The Policy and Constitution Committee recommends the above policy to the membership based on the Executive's prior endorsement of the \$10/day child care plan; this motion was not approved by the membership at the 2014 policy convention.***

12.5 COPE will provide more practical support programs to help immigrant and migrant people, particularly women, living in Vancouver.

### **13. Electoral Reform**

13.1 COPE will hold a public referendum on electoral reform which will offer the voting public the opportunity to:

13.1.1 Keep the current at-large voting system or replace it with a Ward system.

and/or

13.1.2 Keep the current first-past-the-post system of voting or replace it with a system of proportional representation.

13.2 COPE will work with other municipalities to lobby the provincial government to immediately pass legislation that would reform municipal campaign financing by:

13.2.1 Restricting campaign donations to individual persons.

13.2.2 Setting limits on the amounts individuals can contribute.

13.2.3 Setting limits on the amounts individuals and parties can spend during an election.

13.2.4 Implementing public funding of political parties based on the number of votes each party received in the immediately preceding election.

COPE supports NSV Point 2 in the context of this province-wide initiative including implementation of public funding of civic / municipal political parties.

13.3 COPE will put all major public capital spending projects to a public referendum.

13.4 COPE will work with other municipalities to lobby the provincial government to pass legislation that would enable citizens to recall elected City officials.

## **14. Zoning**

14.1 COPE will put a moratorium on the rezoning of industrial land in the city.

14.2 COPE will address land speculation brought on by discretionary zoning practices.

14.3 COPE will increase Development Cost Levies and Community Amenity Contributions, to properly reflect the added infrastructure and amenity costs incurred by the city.

14.4 COPE will not rezone for higher density developments in single-family residential neighbourhoods far from rapid transit stations, and will focus higher density housing construction in existing commercial areas, especially in areas within walking distance of rapid transit stations.

Gretchen made edits to this point as directed by committee

14.5 COPE will only rezone for higher density where the city has adopted a plan in consultation with affected communities to address the social,

economic, and environmental impacts. Gretchen made edits to this point as directed by committee

## **15. Public Libraries**

15.1 COPE will bring democracy to the Library Board, and give a voice to Library staff through designated board positions.

15.2 COPE will not cut hours for Library staff, and will return Vancouver Library staff hours to 2008 levels. COPE will find the means to increase Library hours of operation. This includes expanding the hours of the Special Collections department to 2008 levels.

15.3 COPE will not allow the use of volunteers to perform bargaining unit work.

15.4 COPE will conduct an inquiry into the Information Services Model based on input from Vancouver Public Library patrons and Library staff, and implement changes based on this inquiry to ensure that new implementations of the Information Services Model are functioning to increase Library service and improve working conditions for staff. Based on the findings of this inquiry, COPE will decide whether or not to expand the Information Services Model to other library branches.

## **16. Arts and Culture**

16.1 COPE will undertake a complete audit of all existing artist studio spaces and live performance venues. The results will help provide guidelines for the retention and creation of affordable art and performance spaces.

16.2 COPE will establish *Cultural Land Reserves* to protect Vancouver's dwindling and struggling facilities that exist, particularly in the Downtown Eastside, and other valued venues like the Hollywood Theatre and protect dedicated buildings within the *Cultural Land Reserves* so that they cannot be gentrified into condominiums.

16.3 COPE will create a Vancouver Endowment for the Arts, that would be modelled after both the Canada Council for the Arts and the Vancouver Foundation.

*16.4 COPE will broaden the existing Poet Laureate position to include additional artistic disciplines such as visual arts, new media, music, drama and dance.*

*16.5 COPE will support and advocate for the Arts, Film, Culture and Tourism. Continue to invest in Vancouver's civic theatres and provide sponsorship to cultural events across the city. Will work with local neighbourhoods to preserve the viability of cultural, educational, and recreational amenities through various measures such as tax relief and zoning relaxations.*

*16.6 COPE will improve Arts and Cultural spaces and events funding and will insure that people who are economically disadvantaged have access to those civically funded Arts & Cultural spaces and events. And COPE will strongly advocate that the BC government restore funding from the BCLC to Arts, Culture, and Sports.*

16.7 COPE will respect and protect Heritage buildings and viewsapes as central to Vancouver's identity.

*16.8 COPE will support the preservation of Vancouver's history by updating the Heritage Registry.*

16.9 COPE will work with partner community associations and other organizations to expand and enhance arts and culture programs, including a concerted effort to outreach to arts and culture groups throughout the city, in particular those who either lack awareness of current opportunities, or who have not previously been given the opportunity to participate.

16.10 COPE will encourage arts and culture groups in the city to have input into the design of new and renovated parks and facilities.

**At the 2014 Policy Conference the membership voted to support the NSV Principles: NSV updated the principles on June 24.**

**NSV - Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver Basic Principles**

Draft 16 - June 24, 2014 (Note order of principles does not represent priority of importance) The City of Vancouver should:

1. Make City Hall Open and Accountable - Restore and improve transparency at all levels of governance through a decentralized staff structure, meaningful public involvement in council and committee meetings, independent Freedom of Information processes, open access to land use planning detailed data, financial and budget information; and reintroduction of line by line budgets. Restore unencumbered access to senior city staff by news media.

2. Advance Campaign Finance Reform - Reform campaign financing and related influence at Vancouver City Hall. Regulators of land use policy should not be funded by the industry that they regulate. Restrict campaign donations with spending limits and to individual persons and avoid contributions that could be potential and/or perceived conflicts of interest.

3. Value Vancouver as Community—not Commodity - Ensure that Vancouver remains a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable city of neighbourhoods that values and encourages the broad diversity and character of Vancouver’s local communities, culture and people. Planning, development and policy must place Vancouver and its residents above profit while ensuring that Vancouver develops in harmony with its natural setting, retains outstanding liveability, and is affordable to residents with the full range of occupations and incomes necessary for a vital, diverse and inclusive city.

4. Respect Community Supported Local Area Plans and Community Visions - Ensure that the shape and scale of development remains largely

consistent with established plans and in harmony with neighbourhood context. Review and establish the extent of local support for recent Community and Local Area Plans (including Neighbourhood Centres) developed outside the CityPlan framework. Rein in the current preoccupation with spot rezoning that is distorting neighbourhood character, inflating land values and undermining affordability.

5. Support Neighbourhood-based Planning - Ensure that planning and development are rooted in neighbourhood-based processes with enhanced public trust and established community support. Ensure that recent and future community planning for all Vancouver 's neighbourhoods is consistent with CityPlan terms of reference and restore outreach funding and meaningful influence to Vision Implementation Committees across the city.

6. Empower Community Initiative - Respect and support local initiative, community service and self- reliance. From Community Centre Associations to CityPlan Implementation Committees, citizens should be encouraged and empowered to take stock in their local neighbourhoods, realize their aspirations and promote the distinct character of local communities as part of a broader shared Vancouver.

7. Promote a Diverse and Sustainable Economy - Foster and promote a vibrant and sustainable economy by supporting established industries through appropriate policies and encouraging new enterprise with a focus on high-tech and green economies. Protect remaining industrial lands and collaborate with industry leaders, experts and senior levels of government to develop a strategy for growing a thriving and sustainable manufacturing sector with a diversity of employment opportunities.

8. Advance Social Justice and End Homelessness - Strive to end homelessness and poverty and ensure that municipal policy and services are effective in protecting and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in our society (homeless, low-income seniors, youth, mentally

ill, addicted, etc). Advocate and partner with the housing industry, public agencies and senior levels of government to foster appropriate legislation, programs and funding to address poverty, mental illness, addiction and the chronic shortage of social and assisted housing. Use authority for land use (and other appropriate tools) to help protect existing commercial and not-for-profit services identified by low-income residents as crucial for meeting their needs.

9. Make Real Progress on Housing Affordability - Recognize and address the full range of factors that are contributing to the current shortage of affordable market housing in Vancouver and that densification is not a panacea. The analysis and solution to Vancouver's housing crisis cannot be left to the property development industry and market forces. Research promising approaches and successful policies in other cities, consult with experts and the Vancouver public, and implement an integrated housing strategy that goes well beyond supply and demand.

10. Protect and Expand Rental Housing - Ensure that planning and development do not have adverse impacts on the availability of low income and rental housing. Protect and incentivise the upgrading and improvement of existing rental stock. Where redevelopment is appropriate, improve upon current rate of change regulations and implement a city-wide inclusionary policy for new development, requiring a significant and fixed percentage of units be purpose-built rentals (below- market/rent-controlled if rezoning is involved) for the life of the building, or cash in lieu to be invested in below-market rental housing.

11. Support the Arts, Film, Culture and Tourism - Support and advocate for the arts, film and culture. Continue to invest in Vancouver's civic theatres and provide sponsorship to cultural events across the city. Ensure that planning and development recognizes and protects community assets beyond public institutions. The City should work with local neighbourhoods to identify non-profit and privately operated movie

theatres, live performance venues, art galleries and other de facto cultural, educational and recreational amenities that are highly valued by the community. A wide range of potential measures should be explored, including property tax relief and, where appropriate, zoning relaxations to ensure that these community-valued enterprises remain viable.

12. Protect Heritage Buildings and Viewscapes - Respect and protect heritage buildings and viewscapes as central to Vancouver's identity and the diversity of neighbourhood character and place. Recognize the fuller environmental cost of new construction and incentivise the retention and upgrading of existing buildings, which due to embodied energy and materials are inherently "green." Support neighbourhood-based planning that seeks to employ rezoning and new housing forms as incentives to retain existing heritage and character homes rather than to demolish them.

13. Improve Public Transit - Ensure that Vancouver is well served by an efficient, affordable, and environmentally sustainable public transit system that attracts growing ridership. Planning and delivery of mass rapid transit should be regional in scope and encourage complete regional centres to reduce long-range commuting. The priority for Vancouver should be an extension of the Millennium Line to Central Broadway (not UBC), together with and a major expansion of the existing electric trolley network, including conversion of the 99 B-Line and other high-frequency bus services from diesel to electric. Longer-term upgrading to streetcars should be considered where road capacity and demand are sufficient to justify investment.

14. Reject development-based funding models for public transit - TransLink's mandate to generate revenue through strategic real estate investments (which TransLink calls the "Hong Kong model") constitutes a systemic conflict of interest and would contribute to speculative inflation of land values. Proceeds of rezoning currently support civic amenities and social housing. Diverting this crucial revenue stream from Vancouver to

TransLink would impact the City's capital budget and create pressure for property tax increases (downloading). "Frequent Transit Development Areas" should not be regionally designated to avoid appropriate public consultation or to enable forms of development that are out of scale or otherwise in conflict with local neighbourhood context and/or community-supported plans. Transit-related rezoning should not be considered in advance of infrastructure delivery. The City should oppose further near-term transit fare increases and advocate for sustained federal and provincial funding of transit through progressive carbon-related fees and taxes.

15. Support Active Transportation - Continue to encourage walking and cycling as viable and healthy modes of local transportation with improved infrastructure that must also be in balance with the need to maintain an efficient and well-distributed road and transit network. More sustainable electric and hybrid vehicles, car share programs, and car pooling should also be supported through policy and infrastructure.

16. Improve Environmental Sustainability - Improve practical performance on environmental sustainability. Expand the current recycling program to include plastic bags and further incentivise or mandate deconstruction to maximize reuse, recycling and recovery of the building materials. Protect and enhance the parks, green space and mountain views that make Vancouver a special place.