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# Unveiling the 'Olympic Kidnapping Act': Examining Public Policy and Homelessness in the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Master of Arts

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UNVEILING THE 'OLYMPIC KIDNAPPING ACT': EXAMINING PUBLIC POLICY AND  
HOMELESSNESS IN THE 2010 VANCOUVER OLYMPIC GAMES

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Sophy Chan

Graduate Program in Kinesiology

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Masters of Arts

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## Abstract

This thesis examines how the 2010 Olympic Games contributed to the issue of homelessness in Vancouver. Specifically, this thesis: 1) investigates how local and provincial ordinances were exploited by landlords to displace tenants and used to mobilize spaces for Olympic consumption so that unwanted behaviours related to homelessness were criminalized, and 2) documents and analyzes the arguments put forward by advocacy groups that contested what was happening to low-income and homeless residents because of Olympic development. Throughout, I argue that homelessness was exacerbated in the lead-up to the Olympic Games in two ways. First, landlords and building owners who wanted to profit from the Games exploited loopholes in housing policies. As a result, many tenants experienced adverse treatment and displacement in the lead-up to the Games. Secondly, homelessness policies harmed the homeless because the policies often involved the forceful removal of the homeless from public view.

## Keywords

Olympic Games, Vancouver, public policy, homelessness, poverty, displacement, criminalization

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## Chapter 1

### 1 Introduction

On July 2, 2003, Vancouver was awarded the rights to host the 21<sup>st</sup> Winter Olympic Games in February 2010. Local officials saw the bid as a chance for the city to relive the glory and international acclaim it received from hosting Expo' 86, and took great strides to finance the costly Games. A key issue that organizers had to address was how to balance development interests with social welfare concerns. In the years leading up to the Games, Vancouver struggled to provide adequate shelter and welfare for thousands of individuals facing poverty, homelessness, drug addiction, and crime. Of particular concern was Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), an area adjacent to several Olympic venues that had a longstanding reputation as being one of Canada's poorest urban neighbourhoods.<sup>1</sup> The problems that DTES residents faced, and still face today, are complex and interrelated, including "transience and homelessness, unemployment (22%), low incomes (75% of the 16,000 residents live below the poverty line), high levels of dependence on social assistance, crime, prostitution, HIV infection, drug addiction and dealing."<sup>2</sup>

Six years later, on November 25, 2009, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) published a news report titled, "Protesters say law allows 'kidnapping' of homeless: Intent is to clean up streets for Olympics, say opponents." The report detailed the passing of new legislation in British Columbia, called the *Assistance to Shelter Act*, which enabled the police "to bundle a homeless person into their cruiser and take them to a shelter."<sup>3</sup> Although the *Act* was intended to relieve the homeless during extreme weather, homeless advocates were unconvinced; arguing the real intent behind the *Act* was "to clear street people from Vancouver sidewalks for the 2010

Winter Games in February.”<sup>4</sup> Other people criticized the *Act* as unconstitutional, and subsequently coined the new legislation, the ‘Olympic Kidnapping Act.’

Over the past three decades, scholars have noticed an increase in the overall rate of evictions, violence, and criminalization associated with preparations for Olympic Games.<sup>5</sup> From the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976 to the 2012 Olympic Games in London, UK, low-income and other marginalized individuals have experienced the hardships that come with displacement and the ensuing challenges of living on Olympic-controlled streets. Though the conditions and processes of homelessness that resulted from hosting the Vancouver Olympic Games are not well-documented, scholars have argued that the political and economic elites who led the development of the 2010 Games did not consider the homeless population as part of their vision for a world-class city.<sup>6</sup> In the lead up to the Games, DTES residents experienced significant rent increases, corrupt rental contracts, as well as the loss and decline of thousands of Single-Resident Occupancy (SRO) hotels and subsidized housing due to Olympic-related demolition projects. These changes led many low-income individuals and families to become homeless (despite the installation of several city-wide initiatives to combat crime, homelessness, and poverty), so that more than 3000 homeless people were reported to live in the DTES at the conclusion of the 2010 Olympics.<sup>7</sup> At this point in time, an estimated 15,000 people lived in the DTES. With a history of homelessness in Vancouver, it is questionable whether Vancouver’s choice to host the Games benefitted the city and its residents, especially those who resided in the DTES.

## 1.1 Statement of Purpose

This thesis examines how the 2010 Olympic Games contributed to the issue of homelessness in Vancouver. Specifically, this thesis: 1) investigates how local and provincial

ordinances, such as the *Standards of Maintenance By-law*, *Residential Tenancy Act*, *Single Room Accommodation By-law*, *Project Civil City*, and *Assistance to Shelter Act*, were exploited by landlords to displace tenants and used to mobilize public spaces for Olympic consumption so that unwanted behaviours related to homelessness were criminalized, and 2) documents and analyzes the arguments put forward by advocacy groups that contested what was happening to low-income and homeless residents because of Olympic development. The low-income and homelessness community in Vancouver's DTES is the main focus of this thesis. Throughout, I argue that homelessness was exacerbated in the lead-up to the Olympic Games in two ways. First, landlords and building owners who wanted to profit from the Games exploited loopholes in housing policies, specifically the *Standards of Maintenance By-law*, *Residential Tenancy Act*, and *Single Room Accommodation By-law* – by-laws that city officials failed to enforce. As a result, many tenants experienced adverse treatment and displacement in the lead-up to the Games. Secondly, homelessness policies such as the *Project Civil City* and the *Assistance to Shelter Act* harmed the homeless because both policies involved the forceful removal of the homeless from public view.

This study builds on the work of a small group of established scholars who have documented various aspects of the relationship between hosting Olympic Games and homelessness. My work extends their research by focusing on the 2010 Winter Olympic Games and by providing a detailed picture of how the Olympic Games contributed to the problem of homelessness in Vancouver. This study sheds much needed light on our understanding of homelessness in relation to Olympic Games, as well as the social, economic, and political factors that place the homeless in situations of vulnerability and marginalization. In doing so, this study also contributes to the body of literature that challenges the notion of positive and lasting

Olympic legacies for the public. Practically, this thesis can be used to assist scholars, city planners, property developers, politicians, and sport administrators in their efforts to address and ameliorate similar negative patterns of displacement at future Olympic Games.

## 1.2 Methods

The first stated purpose of this thesis is to identify and explore how local and provincial ordinances were used to displace low-income tenants and secure public spaces for the Olympic Games. Public ordinances deemed harmful to the low-income or homeless communities by Vancouver's advocacy community were used in this thesis. Data collection for this thesis involved an examination of sources from relevant online repositories, including documents released by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, such as the *Residential Tenancy Act* and *Assistance to Shelter Act*, which speak to policy decisions concerning the use of public space and civil liberty issues. I also consulted various reports and policies released by the City of Vancouver such as the *Standards of Maintenance By-law*, *Single Room Accommodation By-law*, and *Project Civil City*, which contributed to the eviction of DTES citizens and rent hikes prior to and during the Olympic Games. Reports, policies, and other related documents from the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) concerning increased enforcement and security for the Olympic Games were also analyzed. Finally, I consulted documents published by the British Columbia Housing Management Commission (BC Housing) which provided supplemental information on the housing policies explored in this thesis. In order to examine how the low-income or homeless population in the DTES were being adversely impacted by public ordinances, a thematic analysis was conducted on all the policies, by-laws, and legislations consulted in this thesis. Themes and keywords which reflected the ways the low-income or homeless population were disadvantaged or limited were analyzed. Special consideration was

given to terms and sections that either blatantly disadvantaged the low-income or homeless community. Terms and sections that were ill-defined were also taken in consideration as these sections offered clues as to how the underprivileged were disadvantaged in the lead-up to the Games.

The second stated purpose of this thesis is to analyze the arguments put forward by critics concerned about how the Games were exacerbating the problems experienced by low-income and homeless people in the DTES. For this section, I consulted the documents published by three prominent Olympic advocacy groups in the lead-up to, during, and after the Olympic Games. The three organizations are the Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition (IOCC), the Carnegie Community Action Project (CCAP), and PIVOT Legal Society (PIVOT). Each organization provided online access to useful documents regarding studies conducted on homelessness in the DTES, and suggested solutions to combat the problem. Each organization also provided transcribed interviews with homeless people and watchdog leaders who addressed the problem of homelessness in association with the Olympic Games. Documents deemed pivotal by Vancouver's advocacy community and which were published between 2003 and 2010 were used in this thesis. Regarding the documents published by the watchdog groups, a thematic analysis was conducted to determine how and to what degree each watchdog group differed in their approach to advocacy, public policy, homelessness, and the Olympic Games. I was particularly interested in examining the priorities and views of each group, and how each group's personal, organizational, and political values affected their approach to policy advocacy for housing and homelessness issues in the lead-up to the Games. I consulted these organizations because they were the most prominent voices for the promotion of housing rights and



preservation of housing stock during the Olympic Games that were documented by print media, specifically, *The Globe and Mail*, the *Vancouver Sun*, and *The Province*.

A thematic analysis of various newspaper sources was also conducted in order to achieve the second stated purpose of the thesis. Media releases from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), and articles from *The Globe and Mail*, *Vancouver Sun*, and *Vancouver Province* were used. Regarding the media used in this chapter, the CBC was used for analysis because it was a prominent news source for many Canadians, rural and urban, and it frequently documented events related to the Olympic Games. *The Globe and Mail* was selected because it was another popular news source for many Canadians, and it was Canada's largest national circulating newspaper. Lastly, the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Vancouver Province* were also selected because they were Vancouver's two most read local newspapers. The timeframe for analysis spanned from January 2003 to December 2010. This timeframe was chosen because 2003 was the year that Vancouver won the Olympic bid and 2010 was the year the Olympic Games were hosted. An online keyword search was conducted in all four media platforms. Although newspaper sources are secondary sources and can often be coloured by the bias of the author, an item was considered to be reliable if a finding resulting from a cross-examination of a single theme or keyword from four different newspapers was consistent or similar.

### 1.3 Review of Literature

The literature review is divided into three sections. The first section examines the literature regarding the consequences of sport mega-event hosting and the material rewards that drive investors and politicians to overspend on these projects. The second section focuses on the literature concerning the privatization of public space, citizenship, and power, and how these

processes work together to define and marginalize the homeless. The third section deals with the literature documenting how Olympic bids, bid victories, and Olympic development plans displace low-income individuals and families from their homes.

### 1.3.1 Social Consequences of Hosting Sport Mega-Events

Since its inception more than a century ago, the modern Olympic Games have become a mega-event of transnational proportions through means of international investment and urban transformation. J.R. Ritchie defines mega-events or hallmark events as, “Major one time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term.”<sup>8</sup> Many cities host mega-events in hopes of reaping various social, political, and economic benefits. Mega-events, such as the Olympic Games, are perceived to give cities the image of having a strong economic standing in the midst of a rapidly changing globalized world.<sup>9</sup> Horne and Manzenreiter note that sport mega-events, such as the Olympic Games, are “central to modern capitalist societies” as they provide opportunities for economic success and to promote those opportunities to the world.<sup>10</sup> The Olympic Games in particular are thought to provide more and better job opportunities, improved transit systems, new housing and sport facilities, increased foreign investments, and tourism.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, mega-events or hallmark events may give cities greater opportunity to receive federal and foreign resources for venue development.<sup>12</sup>

Scholars regard mega-events as “catalysts for destination development and destination branding.”<sup>13</sup> Following the economic success of the 1984 Summer Games in Los Angeles, the Olympics have come to be seen as “one of the most visible strategies for place marketing.”<sup>14</sup> Tourist urbanization, defined as the “growth of cities built around the consumption of pleasure,”

has driven many cities to compete for the right to host the Olympic Games.<sup>15</sup> Mega-events also give many cities the chance to advance long-overdue plans for urban redevelopment. Cities may host mega-events to legitimate long overdue plans to gentrify city areas.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, to convince local citizens to agree to such large investment, cities often promote mega-events as an opportunity to enhance civic identity and improve the community,<sup>17</sup> as well as an opportunity that could transform the overall quality of life for local citizens.<sup>18</sup>

Sport mega-events have been used as an ideological platform to increase the legitimacy of the host country.<sup>19</sup> Selection by a major international organization such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) may signal support for the political and legal institutions of a particular country.<sup>20</sup> Hyun Bang Shin explains that the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games was an example of this phenomenon. Two years prior to Seoul's bid victory, Korea's government had secured power through a military coup d'état. The IOC's decision to select Seoul signalled to the world the IOC's approval of the dictatorial country.<sup>21</sup> Gary Cox notes that city officials and sport authorities promote the local benefits of hosting a major sporting event and also utilize the ideological component of sport mega-events to rally support from local citizens. Citizens are told they will enjoy new infrastructure, job opportunities, and a higher standard of living in their upgraded city.<sup>22</sup>

The accumulation of the economic, political, and social benefits associated with sport mega-event hosting are referred to as a legacy. John Gold and Margaret Gold define 'legacy' as a "comprehensive integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems." City officials planning to implement legacy goals "seek to bring lasting change in the economic, social, physical and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change."<sup>23</sup> In the context of the Olympic Games, Helen Lenskyj views legacy as "infrastructure, housing, and

sporting facilities that are represented as some kind of windfall profit for the host city” and provide social benefits that remain long after the conclusion of the Games.<sup>24</sup> Legacy has become an important and decisive part of the Olympic bid process. In order to remain competitive in the race to host, prospective cities allocate a significant amount of money on Olympic development. In addition to financing the Games, bid cities must also demonstrate the capacity to leave behind a positive, long-term legacy.<sup>25</sup>

However, the promises of a positive legacy might also be used to justify the use of public funds for costly Olympic development projects. Gold and Gold note,

At a time when the Games have grown to bloated proportions, imposing financial and organizational burdens completely out of proportion, concern for legacy has become an inevitable touchstone of the bidding process and a mantra for those who seek to justify the necessary virement of funds to see the project to conclusion.<sup>26</sup>

Lenskyj notes that the legacy left behind a mega-event usually translates into a space that will be manipulated and enjoyed by the private elite. The public bears the burden of paying for projects that fulfill the aspirations of city planners, the business class, and politicians, rather than the majority of residents, especially the marginalized populations.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, Lenskyj describes the Olympic Games as an “Olympic Industry.” Instead of an event used to promote the well-being of people engaged in sport, the Olympic Games are events organized by the private elite for their personal gain, but are funded largely by public dollars.<sup>28</sup>

Scholars describe the Olympic Games as ‘planning disasters’<sup>29</sup> that are inevitably debt-financed, leading to heavy cost-overruns and financial crises.<sup>30</sup> Under tight deadlines, cities

spend billions in order to hasten the completion of large-scale infrastructure projects. Additionally, to ensure projects are completed without disruption, cities may use public funds without consultation to accelerate project development and reassure creditors of financial protection.<sup>31</sup> Jay Scherer notes that Vancouver passed *Bill 47: The Vancouver Charter Amendment Act* for the completion of the Olympic Village in 2009. This bill allowed Vancouver to fund large development projects without public input.

Additionally, debts incurred from mega-events often sustain and exacerbate the social conditions of disadvantaged host city citizens. Residents near construction sites may experience displacement, eviction, higher traffic and pollution, tax increases, increased real estate prices, and few social benefits.<sup>32</sup> Mega-project costs are often inaccurately reported, as cities invest money in projects not related directly to the Games and want to keep those costs out of the Olympic budget. For the 2010 Games, the City of Vancouver upgraded the sea-to sky highway connecting Vancouver to Whistler, built a transit system that connects the downtown to Vancouver's international airport, and constructed the new Vancouver Convention Centre, which totalled an estimated \$4 billion.<sup>33</sup> The public usually has little say on the subject, despite earlier promises of accountability from city government and planners.<sup>34</sup> Unfortunately, it has only been recently that cities have started to think critically about entering the competitive race to the costs involved with the bid process.

### 1.3.2 Homelessness, Citizenship, and Privatized Space

City officials and business elites often filter out 'unwanted' individuals by means of 'human street sweeps' and legislation that criminalizes poverty so as to fit their image of a world-class city. These processes often strip marginalized people of their right to access public

space. Some scholars have suggested that homelessness, as a social stratum and as a lifestyle, will soon become impossible in host cities if privatization continues in this way.<sup>35</sup>

As victims of social exclusion, the homeless are often the most invisible and discounted group in society.<sup>36</sup> Homeless people, as well as the mentally ill, vagrants, alcoholics, drug addicts, the unemployed, and prostitutes are often viewed as “individuals whose misfortunes are of their own making” and as useless “social junk.”<sup>37</sup> As people who are thought to drain society’s resources, the homeless are often perceived as dangerous individuals who pose a threat to the social and moral order of society.<sup>38</sup> However, Randall Amster argues, the “threat of homeless people is generally one of perception than reality,”<sup>39</sup> since they hold almost no societal power and are not a viable political, economic, or military group. Still, ideas about homelessness remain because the ideology of homelessness is so strongly rooted in deviancy, abnormality, and negativity.<sup>40</sup> Ultimately these negative perceptions are what drive “public demands for exclusion-oriented legal practices aimed at erasing [the] visible presence [the homeless] from public space.”<sup>41</sup> Therefore, homelessness is not merely an economic issue, but an ideological one as well.

Homelessness is difficult to define because it is a “product of the convergence of factors operating at the local, national, and global scales.”<sup>42</sup> Although the homeless are commonly understood as individuals without a home, the definition of ‘home’ fluctuates because different individuals experience and define ‘home’ and ‘housing’ in different ways. Nevertheless, it is clear that the normative experiences of homeless people include “severe and multifaceted experiences of marginality and exclusion from mainstream society.”<sup>43</sup> *Oxford Dictionaries* defines ‘home’ as “the place where one lives permanently, especially as a member of a family or household.”<sup>44</sup> The term ‘home’ implies a personal connection to the residence or to other

occupants dwelling in the space. The Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) and the United Nations notes that an adequate standard of living and adequate housing is a basic human right.<sup>45</sup>

Homelessness refers to the conditions of those without a consistent residence of personal attachment, and individuals within those conditions who hold no power to control, alleviate, or avoid homelessness. They are individuals who experience social, economic, political, and physical barriers that disallow them to maintain or acquire permanent residence.<sup>46</sup> According to the Canadian Homelessness Research Network (CHRN),

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination.<sup>47</sup>

For the purpose of this thesis, the homeless include individuals without a home and individuals who were forcefully displaced from their homes into homelessness and/or temporary residences.<sup>48</sup>

Both human rights and homelessness share ties with citizenship. Laura Huey states, “the ability to access rights and [be] recognized by the state and polity is the mark of true citizenship.”<sup>49</sup> A homeless individual is a person who exists and is governed by the rules of society, but has no relation to it and cannot access the privileges shared by people living in the same space.<sup>50</sup> According to Patricia Kennett, homelessness is also an outcome of social exclusivity.<sup>51</sup> Social exclusion is defined as “processes which separates people from ordinary

social exchange that promote integration and participation from rights and services which imply full membership of society.”<sup>52</sup> For example, in democratic countries, the homeless often cannot vote because they do not have a fixed home address. Their inability to vote means they do not have the opportunity to offer input into how their city and state should be governed.

Homeless individuals are also regarded as non-citizens because they are unable to contribute to the local economies of their cities.<sup>53</sup> Kennett notes, “Discourses of citizenship are shaped not only by the material and political realities which they (selectively) reflect, but also by the way they seek to provide justification for the principles and social activities which organize reality.”<sup>54</sup> As such, the renegotiation of citizenship through capitalism has produced increased degrees of inequality, social exclusion, and homelessness.<sup>55</sup> In today’s North American society, citizenship requires economic mobility and social membership, neither of which the homeless possess. As a result, the homeless are disadvantaged and further to that, are often discounted in major economic restructuring projects, such as mega-event hosting.

The privatization of public space is one of the main reasons why the homeless experience social exclusion. Sociologists often describe space as a complex social construct comprised of a material and ideological nature.<sup>56</sup> Sonia Hirt defines the material component of space as a physical place.<sup>57</sup> Randall Amster defines the ideological component of space as a “reflection of social processes and a primary factor in the production of such reflections.”<sup>58</sup> This happens when private elites purchase land and control the images and types of people who should occupy it. The physical and ideological elements of space vary according to their historical and cultural context. ‘Public space’ and ‘private space’ are concepts that are often ambiguous, especially when publicly accessible spaces, such as malls and tolled roads, are privately owned. Therefore, as a product of past and present “social negotiation and contestation,” definitions of public space



are not universal or enduring.<sup>59</sup> Although public spaces are areas that all people are entitled to legally access, they are often places of exclusion.<sup>60</sup> Amster notes “visions of public space are largely concerned with the ideals and principles embedded in its formation” and it is often the basis of “regulatory efforts to purify public space, reinforce patterns of power and privilege, encourage aggression, and enforce new forms of spatial exclusion.”<sup>61</sup> In theory, Hirt notes that public space boasts open-accessibility, but in practice, there are many barriers to accessing public space. For the purposes of this thesis, public space will be defined as a common space intended to be freely accessible to everyone.<sup>62</sup>

Hirt defines private space as “spaces used by small groups of people, spaces that are physically enclosed, or spaces to which access is limited via various material or non-material impediments.”<sup>63</sup> Amster defines the privatization of space as a mechanism which brings public space into private ownership and “enables large-scale property owners to exclude ‘undesirables’ from places of investment and privilege intended to attract up-scale sub-urbans.”<sup>64</sup> As noted earlier, many homeless individuals find themselves in a socially disadvantaged position due to various societal barriers. As such, privately-owned public space often disfavours the interests and needs of homeless individuals. In regards to mega-projects, private developers who purchase public space usually do not involve the homeless in their implementation and vision.

Mega-events are usually held in public spaces that are privately owned. In today’s increasingly competitive global economy, large-scale evictions and displacements have become a trademark of mega-event hosting.<sup>65</sup> The image of ‘undesirables’ inhabiting Olympic space puts city officials under tremendous pressures to move the homeless prior to the start of the Games to uphold their preferred world-class city image.<sup>66</sup> Therefore, removing the visibility of poverty from affluent and gentrified areas of the city has become essential to event-oriented renewal

schemes. Many city planners and politicians argue that displacement is an inevitable and natural part of large-scale redevelopment.<sup>67</sup> Displacement occurs when “the spaces and places in which citizens actively create their daily existence together are invisible to bureaucratic abstractions of ‘delivering’ major venues and new infrastructure.”<sup>68</sup>

In creating new spaces, gentrification and re-development create opportunities for city planners to redefine the type of people they want to occupy a certain space.<sup>69</sup> The privatization of public space has become increasingly prevalent within the past three decades, and this exchange has contributed to greater degrees of economic and social inequality.<sup>70</sup> In order to attract foreign investors and visitors, property developers privatize space and intentionally exclude or ward off undesirable people, for instance, by making public places uncomfortable for the homeless to live in.<sup>71</sup> Today, major commercial landmarks and mega-events are ‘fortresses’ which create “new and more extreme forms of spatial and social segregation.”<sup>72</sup> As privatized space, property owners are entitled to make all political and economic decisions, making the city “exempt from legal ramifications of shunning away specific segments of the population.”<sup>73</sup> Shopping malls, private clubs, large conferences, and major sporting events are examples of the ‘fortress’ phenomenon which has kept strangers and unwanted individuals out of certain spaces.<sup>74</sup> Private property, gated areas, paid parking lots, removal of public benches, modified garbage disposal units, and private security forces are just some examples of how the fortress phenomenon prevents homeless individuals from inhabiting a space.

In preparation for sport mega-events such as the Olympic Games, cities have implemented various ‘tactics of control,’ such as human street sweeps and increased street arrests to produce a visually pleasing city. With the rationale of creating a space “devoid of embarrassing social problems,”<sup>75</sup> street sweeps have become the standard procedure for many

Olympic host cities since the 1980s.<sup>76</sup> Street sweeps are procedures usually conducted before the start of mega-events in which police are given authority to lock up vagrant or deviant street dwellers for a period of time. Street sweeps and street arrests are often invasive procedures which involve the harassment and arrest of marginal individuals, such as the homeless and sex trade workers.<sup>77</sup>

It follows then, that cities looking to host mega-events also experience an increase in policing and surveillance of homeless individuals and street activity. The criminalization of poverty occurs when local ordinances are put in place to punish street activity that may tarnish the city's image.<sup>78</sup> It is also a product of a social struggle to define what and who should occupy and represent a space. Police may choose to prohibit undesirable individuals from dwelling in certain parts of the city by implementing a 'red zone', which "is an area that the police have designated as 'out of bounds' to particular [individuals] who have been banished for partaking in illegitimate (though not always criminal) behaviour."<sup>79</sup> Homeless citizens are often subject to arrests or charges if police deem their activity disruptive to the public, even if the activity was not criminal in nature. These activities include, but are not limited to, panhandling, loitering, public camping, squeegeeing, and picking from the trash, which are all important survival strategies for the homeless. Overall, procedures to clean the streets, combined with legislation, reinforce the idea that homeless individuals are not legitimate citizens; rather, they are a nuisance and need to be monitored and controlled.

### 1.3.3 Homelessness and the Olympic Games

One of the first documented cases of homelessness was found in the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal. On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1976, *The Montreal Gazette* published an article titled

“‘Olympic Victims Hotel’ shelters city’s homeless,” in which several low-income and welfare-dependent Montreal families and individuals found themselves living in deplorable conditions, aggravated by “government extravagance and indifference to the city’s housing conditions.”<sup>80</sup>

This was the first of many articles documenting the stay of families and individuals evicted from their homes due to steep rent hikes and Olympic-related demolition projects.<sup>81</sup> Following the start of the two-month occupation, squatters taped signs over the front door of St. Jean Baptiste Meilleur Primary School and Gabriel Souart Secondary School, labelling their temporary residence as the “Olympic Victims Hotel.”<sup>82</sup> On another sign was written, “We want to be lodgers with social dignity.”<sup>83</sup> Both schools were offered by the Montreal Catholic School Commission as temporary residences. Expenses invested into the move subsequently emptied the funds of many families to purchase food and rent.

In an attempt to mend the situation, Montreal welfare offices offered many of the squatters immediate housing. However, the immediate housing offered to the squatters consisted of apartments with broken windows, rotting floors, cockroach and rat infestations.<sup>84</sup> The living conditions of the squatters at the schools were poor as well. The victims lived off a communal food pot fed by city donations and the Aid to Fire organization. Most of the food available throughout their two month stay at the school was canned goods and donated staples. Fights were caused over a lack in food supply and the squatters often went hungry.<sup>85</sup>

On the day before opening of the Games, twenty-five squatters parked giant food trucks outside the main gate of the East End Olympic Village in hopes of collecting leftover food thrown out by kitchen staff.<sup>86</sup> Robert Gagnon, Director of Food Services at the Olympic Village refused the squatters, claiming only rotten food was available. Contrary to Gagnon’s claim, Olympic food staff reported that at least 30% of leftover food was thrown out per day, and extra

food would not be given to staff members themselves.<sup>87</sup> The school squatters left the Olympic Village empty-handed.

August 26, 1976 marked the end of the squatters' two month school occupation.<sup>88</sup> The squatters stayed at the schools for nearly a month after the conclusion of the Games. Fifty-seven squatters moved out of St. Jean Meilleur School and headed to St. Bibiane, a vacant and unlocked school near the Olympic Park. Police arrived the moment the school was opened and another eviction order was issued. The squatters ultimately surrendered to the eviction call: "Both women and men cried as they watched their furniture being brought down from the "only home" they had."<sup>89</sup>

Although the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games has been praised as one of the most successful Games in modern history, Lenskyj notes that many homeless people were arrested for jaywalking and other street-related crimes during or near the time of the Games.<sup>90</sup> The homeless were also detained without charge for up to twenty-two hours and the police were authorized to administer street sweeps. Helen Lenskyj's *Inside the Olympic Industry: Power, Politics, and Activism* is one of the first scholarly books that provides an in-depth look at human rights violations, particularly through forceful evictions, in the Olympic Games.

The Olympic-related evictions of the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games are regarded as one of the most brutal events in mega-event history. In the 1980s, Korea saw a drastic progression from self-built housing to high-rise apartments and business buildings. The change towards the industrialized production of housing subsequently shifted the social and political structure in Korea and fostered desires to host the Olympic Games in order to boost local businesses, increase foreign investment, and promote South Korea as a superpower in international politics.<sup>91</sup>

After successfully winning the bid, the Korean bid corporation promptly planned for the construction of high-rise buildings. Preparations for the 1988 Seoul Olympics were “one of the world’s most physically violent and brutal housing relocation policies” because of the way Korean citizens were displaced from their homes after being sold to private developers for Olympic projects.<sup>92</sup>

In December 1982, the Korean government passed Public Law #3646, which “relaxed limits on building height and size in the central business districts.”<sup>93</sup> Lisa Kim Davis noted that the law was the key that legitimized and encouraged massive redevelopment in association with the Olympic Games. However, the law was simultaneously the cause for small business owners and community dwellers to lose out to conglomerates purchasing the space for commercial use.<sup>94</sup> Much of the rationale behind Public Law #3646 was for the sake of “city beautification,”<sup>95</sup> which was a government-organized campaign to remove and demolish large tracts of inexpensive buildings constructed without permits in residential areas and replace them with condominiums without consent. Not surprisingly, the regulation came under scrutiny by the public and even major political parties. Davis noted that mayors were continuously replaced until one was found who would pursue and support the plans for Olympic development.<sup>96</sup>

Between 1983 and 1988, 48,000 buildings housing 720,000 residents were destroyed to clear way for Olympic developments.<sup>97</sup> Low-income housing was bought out by wealthier citizens and property values were raised a substantial amount.<sup>98</sup> The most famous case of displacement in association with the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games occurred in the Sanggyedong district. The eviction case became so notorious that a documentary was made to expose the crimes committed towards the residents of Sanggyedong.<sup>99</sup> Prior to the Games, 380 residents had their belongings removed by a force of more than 3,000 workers because their homes were in

sight of the Olympic torch route.<sup>100</sup> Security forces were hired by government officials to knock down citizens' homes and the community spent the torch-run period living in holes, caves, or plastic shelters out of sight of the road.<sup>101</sup> Tents used as community centers were burned down by privately hired security forces, and water and electricity supply was cut off. Protesters of all ages were also attacked by a police force hired by private construction companies.<sup>102</sup> Lisa Kim Davis' article, *International Events and Mass Evictions: A Longer View* provides valuable insight on the effects of the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games and the Korean housing market.<sup>103</sup> In addition, Helen Lenskyj's book, *Inside the Olympic Industry* provides a similar narrative to that of Davis'.<sup>104</sup>

Displacement related to the 1988 Calgary Olympic Games took form in abuse of student and tenant rights. The *Landlord and Tenant Act* in Calgary did little to prevent unwarranted evictions and rent increases throughout the Games.<sup>105</sup> Occupants of university student residences, low-income residential hotels, and rooming houses had little to no protection from Olympic-related eviction and rent increases.<sup>106</sup> Prior to the Games, over 2,000 students and low-income renters were temporarily or permanently evicted to provide accommodation for Olympic tourists. Although some financial incentives were offered to tenants willing to surrender their residences for the duration of the Games, 1,000 university students were omitted from the bursary.<sup>107</sup>

The 1992 Barcelona Games witnessed numerous street sweeps targeting prostitutes the homeless.<sup>108</sup> Nearly 400 homeless people were policed by legislation criminalizing street activity. The promise to provide subsidized housing in the post-Olympic village was unmet, and most of the 6,000 units were sold for 240,000 pounds. The subsidized housing was so expensive that one resident claimed it would have taken her three lifetimes to afford a new unit.<sup>109</sup>

Additionally, the presence of the Olympic Games may have exacerbated the housing market in Barcelona. Between 1986 and 2002, new house prices in Barcelona had increased by 250% and the city also experienced a drastic increase in the number of renters.<sup>110</sup>

Throughout the 1996 Olympic Games, the marginalized populations of Atlanta also faced eviction and abuse.<sup>111</sup> Prior to the Games, housing issues in Atlanta were of critical concern for homeless advocates and bid organizers.<sup>112</sup> At the time of the bid, Lenskyj notes that 30% of the population lived below the poverty line and the number of homeless ranged in the 20,000s. Like other Olympic cities, the Olympic Games were seen first and foremost as an urban development project.<sup>113</sup>

Fifteen thousand residents were evicted from two of Atlanta's oldest social-housing apartments and an additional 5,000 housing units were demolished for the creation of new residences slated first as Olympic accommodation.<sup>114</sup> Between 1990 and 1995, 9,500 units of affordable housing were demolished and \$350 million (USD) in public spending was "diverted from low income housing, social services, homeless support."<sup>115</sup> Churches and human service organizations were paid to temporarily house Olympic tourists. Lenskyj notes that rental rates increased 20 to 25% the year before the Games started. Landlords also illegally abused tenants' rights by issuing evictions with only seven days' notice.<sup>116</sup>

In 1994, Atlanta gave police the authority to criminalize and issue arrests for street activities such as panhandling, loitering, public camping, loitering in abandoned buildings, squeegeeing, and picking items out of trashcans.<sup>117</sup> This meant the criminalization of a variety of activities which enabled the homeless to survive. 9,000 Black men who made up 90% of Atlanta's homeless population were reportedly arrested for violating street ordinances.<sup>118</sup>



Lenskyj argues that the Olympic Games not only exacerbate social problems, but to deepen racial and class divides as well.<sup>119</sup>

Between 1995 and 1996, under Project Homeward Bound, the city transported hundreds of ‘undesired’ people out of the city and threatened to sentence them six months in jail if they returned. Assisting the project were non-profit organizations that worked under city auspices to bus the homeless out of town. These organizations were paid between \$500,000 and \$750,000 (USD) if the citizens they transported did not return.<sup>120</sup>

In preparation for the 2000 Olympic Games, Sydney residents also experienced Olympic-related evictions. In March 2000, fifty individuals who were made homeless because of rent increases began occupying three empty buildings owned by City Council. The squatters “cleaned the rooms, repaired the floor and roof, fixed the shower and toilets, secured doors and windows” and installed various appliances in order to make the abandoned buildings habitable.<sup>121</sup> Three weeks prior to the start of the Olympics, the squatters were given notice to vacate the premises. Squatters were warned that failure to comply with the notice would result in a police raid.<sup>122</sup>

With the help of the local community, the squatters were given permission to stay in one of the buildings until the designated move out date on September 25th.<sup>123</sup> An email was sent to notify the squatters that council officials would arrive at 8 AM to board up the squatters.<sup>124</sup> However, just after midnight on the 25<sup>th</sup>, eight police officers arrived on premises, tried to kick down the doors, and “aggressively pushed, searched and harassed sleepy squatters.”<sup>125</sup> City employees who arrived the next day to move the squatters received protests and deemed the situation too complicated to carry on. The issue remained unresolved long after the Games.

Students attending the University of Sydney also experienced housing problems throughout the Games. A significant proportion of the university's buildings, sport facilities, and student residences were contracted for use by the Sydney Organising Committee.<sup>126</sup> Students were evicted from their rooms for four weeks and were given only 24 hours' notice to vacate. Following the Games, demands were made for students to pay reconnection and set-up fees for Internet and phone services. International students were put in even more vulnerable positions as many students were unfamiliar with Sydney's rental market and unknowingly paid rental rates higher than usual.<sup>127</sup> This shows how different segments of the population can be affected by the Olympic Games.

Even before the hosting of the Games in 2004, "Roma, urban squatters, asylum seekers, prostitutes, homeless people" had long been subjected to dismissal and enforcement of the Greek government.<sup>128</sup> In preparation for Olympic development, 2,700 Roma were evicted for the purpose of reclaiming land and resources for Olympic construction. Additionally, squatters in temporary stay at a university student residence were ordered to vacate the premises for the accommodation of journalists attending the Games.<sup>129</sup>

In the eight years leading up to the 2008 Olympic Games, 1.5 million Beijing citizens were evicted and displaced from their homes because of Olympic-related construction projects.<sup>130</sup> The Center on Housing Rights and Evictions noted that the Beijing government and the Beijing Organizing Committee were the main culprits for evicting low-income tenants because the Beijing government failed to provide adequate notice for eviction and compensation to assist citizens in securing new accommodation and services.<sup>131</sup>

Between 2006 and 2008, an average of 60,000 homes was demolished per year, resulting in the displacement of approximately 156,000 citizens per year.<sup>132</sup> In the year of the Olympic Games, 250,000 citizens were displaced from their homes. In Xianyukou, a small region of Beijing, 20% of the 2,750 households were forced to move from their homes.<sup>133</sup> During mediation talks, residents were harassed and threatened by the demolition company negotiating the compensation, and many families accepted lower compensation as a result.<sup>134</sup> When the evictions were carried out, the demolition company took the evictee's furniture, stored it in temporary worker housing, and charged rent to the household until they came to retrieve their possessions.<sup>135</sup> In the end, many residents were far removed from reliable sources of employment, community networks, schooling, and health care facilities.<sup>136</sup>

### 1.3.4 The 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games: Context and Review

In 1998, the Vancouver-Whistler 2010 Bid Corporation for the 2010 Olympic Games was formed.<sup>137</sup> In 1999, the City of Vancouver passed the Southeast False Creek Policy to plan for the Olympic Village in the False Creek area.<sup>138</sup> The primary goal of the policy was to foster a sustainable residential community after the conclusion of the Games. The policy was passed at around the same time the Vancouver-Whistler 2010 Bid Corporation began to campaign for the possibility of a Vancouver Olympics.<sup>139</sup> Although city officials wanted to host the Games, concerns about social housing and downtown rejuvenation were raised among the public and advocacy groups.<sup>140</sup> In March 2000, housing concerns were temporarily alleviated when government partners implemented the Vancouver Agreement.<sup>141</sup> The Vancouver Agreement was an initiative signed between the federal Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, and the City of Vancouver to implement strategies to address issues of poverty, drug

addiction, public safety, and health in the DTES.<sup>142</sup> The official website of the Vancouver Agreement listed these strategies as possible ways to assist “economic revitalization, safety and security, housing, health and quality of life.”<sup>143</sup> The Agreement received the Institute for Public Administration of Canada’s highest award.

Although the Vancouver Agreement was meant to create a positive legacy, scholars have noted that the primary motive behind the Agreement was to justify bid desires by linking re-development and re-imaging efforts to social priorities.<sup>144</sup> Nathan Edelson’s article, “Inclusivity as an Olympic Event at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games,” explains how the organizers of the 2010 Vancouver Games implemented many initiatives to improve issues of social inclusivity, particularly the problem of homelessness in Vancouver. The author’s main argument is that the Olympic Games had become a major catalyst to addressing pressing social issues in Vancouver, yet the city should have dealt with these issues much earlier. Additionally, Edelson argues that budgets spent towards Olympic projects could have been put towards funding the impoverished, illustrating that the priority of social inclusivity issues remained low in comparison to Olympic development.

Furthermore, the Vancouver Agreement and the Southeast False Creek Policy were both created during the most crucial moments of Olympic-related decision-making. As attitudes towards submitting an Olympic bid became more serious, the Agreement and the Southeast False Creek Policy were created to show the public that initiatives were being put in place by the City to ensure the well-being of Vancouver citizens if Vancouver won the bid. In 2002, the Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation and the City Council signed a financial agreement that committed both groups to funding the Olympic Village at the Southeast False Creek location. This is important because the City was willing to commit itself financially to hosting the

Olympic Games even prior to winning the bid. It was also the first of many commitments that the City made with the Olympic organizing committee.

In that same year, the Vancouver-Whistler Bid Corporation was replaced by the Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation. The duration of Vancouver-Whistler Bid Corporation lasted from 1998 to 2002. As attitudes towards the bid became more serious, various community activists and academics converged to form the Olympic watchdog group, Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition (IOCC) in 2002. The IOCC was “dedicated to maximizing the positive impacts of the 2010 Games for the host city and surrounding regions, while minimizing the negative impacts.”<sup>145</sup> The IOCC also demanded the Olympic bid corporation to consider issues regarding environmental sustainability, community involvement in decision-making processes, and impact evaluation.<sup>146</sup>

Also in 2002, the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, and the City of Vancouver convened to create the Inner-City Inclusive Olympics Working Group (IWG). The group drafted a list of commitments called the 2010 Inclusive Winter Games Commitment Statement (ICI),<sup>147</sup> by which the Vancouver 2010 Bid Committee (later to be the Vancouver Olympic Committee) promised to abide. The list of commitments included promises to provide more business development opportunities, First Nations involvement, employment opportunities, community involvement, affordable transportation, and “a legacy of affordable housing.”<sup>148</sup> Of all the issues raised in the ICI, the City was most concerned about how the Games would affect and exacerbate housing losses, evictions, and homelessness. Of particular concern were the single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels in the DTES. SROs often house welfare recipients, low-income individuals, and were regarded as the last resort before homelessness. These units were under the greatest threat of demolition and eviction for the Olympic Games. In response, the

IWG promised to “ensure people are not made homeless as a result of the Winter Games” and “residents are not involuntarily displaced, evicted, or face unreasonable increases in rent.”<sup>149</sup>

However, David Eby notes that no Olympic-related social units promised in the ICI were opened prior to the Games, and landlords continued to unlawfully evict many SRO occupants due to the weak Residential Tenancy Act.<sup>150</sup> David Eby’s article, “Closing Ceremonies: How Law, Policy, and the Winter Olympics are Displacing an Inconveniently Located Low-Income Community in Vancouver,” explains the effects of policing upon the low-income community in the lead up to the Olympic Games. As a respected lawyer and DTES citizen, Eby’s research critiques how the 2010 Games had disadvantaged local citizens through eviction and police harassment.

In the same year, 2002, the newly elected City Council requested to hold a province-wide referendum on the city’s potential bid. Fearing that chances for bid selection would be compromised if British Columbians rejected the proposal, the Bid Committee opposed the referendum. Nevertheless, the City Council decided to set up a plebiscite for Vancouverites only, and though the mayor and city councillors campaigned in support of the bid, the “Yes” side won with only 64%.<sup>151</sup> In addition, although the IOCC and the IWG demanded transparency and accountability regarding budgets and social inclusivity issues, the demands of both groups were eventually ignored by the Vancouver 2010 Bid Committee. Both groups were not included in bid committee negotiations, nor did VANOC take measures to ensure its commitments were being met following the bid victory.<sup>152</sup> On July 2, 2013, after Vancouver was chosen to host the Games, the City passed a by-law in an attempt to regulate the conversion and demolition of SROs. More than 1000 SRO rooms were already unavailable for rent due to voluntary closure by landlords or significant rent increases. This meant that even though the City had put measures in place so that SROs could not be destroyed and sold without notice, people in need of housing

still could not move into the units because of closure or cost-related issues. Although many low-income citizens were in need of a home, subsidized housing units were rented to Olympic construction workers working on major infrastructure projects, illustrating how homelessness and housing issues were not addressed as promised.

In 2006, city officials chose Millennium Developments to create the Olympic Village in Southeast False Creek.<sup>153</sup> The Vancouver-based company's \$193 million bid beat out offers by Concert Properties and Concord Pacific Developments, each of which had strong ties to VANOC and Vancouver's property market.<sup>154</sup> In addition to constructing the Olympic Village, Millennium Developments was also responsible for the construction of 800 units of market housing, 252 units of social housing, a community center, and a childcare facility.<sup>155</sup> Despite the promise of new market housing units, Millennium's exorbitant bid raised concerns that even middle-class citizens may not be able to afford living in Millennium's units.<sup>156</sup> For VANOC, the Olympic Village was a lucrative financial opportunity to facilitate property market sales, expand the market value of the area, and recreate Vancouver as a cutting-edge and self-sustaining world-class city.<sup>157</sup> On the same note, motions to install expensive sustainable features into the Olympic Village, such as green technology and non-market housing, were not the aspirations of local developers. Rather, visions for sustainability were implemented by "civic elites to distinguish False Creek as the world's most sustainable waterfront community."<sup>158</sup>

In stark contrast to Millennium Developments' \$193 million bid to redevelop the Southeast False Creek area, SRO buildings were destroyed and rebuilt for tourist accommodations at a rate four times higher than the City had expected.<sup>159</sup> In 2006, Vancouver experienced a loss of at least 4,000 SROs due to conversions, rent increases, and closures, and, welfare for shelter assistance provided by the provincial government had not been increased

since 2004.<sup>160</sup> Therefore, individuals who already struggled to survive in SROs would likely become homeless due to increased rental rates and increased property values as a result of the Olympic Games.

In the same year Millennium Developments was chosen to build the Olympic Village, the City of Vancouver started *Project Civil City*. The project's goal was to significantly reduce street crime in preparation for the Olympic Games and to promote Vancouver as a safe and liveable world-class city.<sup>161</sup> Specific objectives involved reducing homelessness by 50%, eliminating Vancouver's open drug market, decreasing aggressive panhandling, and increasing public satisfaction regarding the "City's approach to public nuisance" by 2010.<sup>162</sup> Beyond attempts to reducing homelessness and the drug trade, the City also addressed solutions for better health treatment programs, better homeless programs, cleaner streets, and better policing efforts.<sup>163</sup> Although the initiatives were for the betterment of Vancouver, the project was ultimately dropped in 2008 due to a shift in composition of the new City Council.<sup>164</sup> The rise and fall of *Project Civil City* speaks to the low priority given to social change when compared to business interests involved in hosting the Games.

By September 2008, Millennium Developments was \$150 million over budget and the deadline for completion was still a year away. In response, the New York-based Fortress Investment Group, which had already lent Millennium Developments \$750 million to complete the Olympic Village, decided to drop Millennium's funding.<sup>165</sup> Not only was the Olympic Village's completion in jeopardy, the project itself had become debt financed. At this time, city officials felt they had little choice but to fund Millennium Developments to complete the Olympic Village. This was the case because in the event Millennium Developments went over budget, municipal officials had agreed to provide the hedge fund for the guarantee of completion.



The hedge fund agreement was made in confidentiality and eventually brought great mistrust from the citizens.

Jay Scherer's article, "Olympic Villages and Large-scale Urban Development" critiques Vancouver's mismanagement of finances and public relations for the completion of the Olympic Village. There were four implications. First, the City's decision to finance Millennium's cost over-run meant the entire financial subsidy for the hedge fund would eventually be funded by taxpayers' dollars. Second, due to the confidential nature of the hedge, the City had no choice but to fund Millennium's cost over-runs, as well as any payments demanded by Fortress Investment Group. It was revealed that on June 26, 2007, the City had secretly wired Fortress Group \$190 million for Millennium Development's \$750 million loan without the consent of the public.<sup>166</sup> Third, had Millennium been financed by a major Canadian bank and not the hedge fund, the financial risk for the public sector might have been reduced.<sup>167</sup> On October 14, 2008, the City advanced Millennium Developments an additional \$100 million from the municipally-operated Property Endowment Fund to help with the cost over-runs.<sup>168</sup> Fourth, the confidential nature of the loan agreement between the City and Millennium Developments had severed the trust between the City and ITS citizens. Vancouver's private dealings with Millennium Developments demonstrated how cities might abuse public dollars for private projects and how city officials are not accountable to the public.

Fearing the Olympic Village would not be completed in time for the Games, the City purchased the rest of Millennium's building loan from Fortress Investment Group in 2009 at the cost of \$319.5 million. In order to legitimate such a significant purchase, the provincial government convened an emergency meeting to pass *Bill 49: The Vancouver Charter Amendment Act*. The amendment states, "The city may, for purposes of financing of, or financing

arising in relation to, the development project, on terms and conditions the Council considers necessary or advisable, do any of the following.”<sup>169</sup> The city may “take assignment of a loan as lender, or assignment of another right or interest in relation to liability” without the need for public consultation or accountability.<sup>170</sup> This is significant because it shows how Vancouver passed legislation to ensure certain projects were financed.

In addition to Olympic Village costs, Olympic spending also included new sports venues (\$979 million),<sup>171</sup> Sea-to-Sky highway improvements (\$775 million),<sup>172</sup> and \$7.8 billion for the Athletes Village Canada Line station.<sup>173</sup> These costs were not included in VANOC’s overall budget because they were not directly related to the Olympic Games, so that the actual estimates for expenditure are substantially higher than what was reported.<sup>174</sup> Aside from the new sports venues, the improvements were used to improve accessibility between the city core and Olympic sites and were not included in Olympic costs. Despite assurances from the provincial government and VANOC that the Olympic budget would not exceed \$600 million dollars, the real cost of the Games totalled at least \$6 billion.<sup>175</sup>

In contrast to the sums the city afforded for the Games, the city failed to invest money into housing units and homelessness. After winning the Olympic bid, the DTES lost at least 1400 units of subsidized housing.<sup>176</sup> Between 2002 and 2008, Olympic-related temporary evictions and large scale closures of low-income housing resulted in a 373% increase in homelessness in Vancouver. Approximately 3,000 people were reported to be living in the downtown area by 2010, making one in five DTES residents homeless.<sup>177</sup> Moreover, the Landlord and Tenant Act did not prevent corrupt landlords from inflating rental rates of SROs to exploit the changes brought about from hosting the Olympic Games.

Vancouver also experienced a drastic increase in policing, charges, and arrests before and throughout the Games. In 2008, the Vancouver Police Department issued nearly nine times the usual amount of tickets for street crimes, such as jaywalking and illegal street vending.<sup>178</sup> Vancouver invested nearly \$1 billion dollars into security for the prevention of terrorism and reducing street disorder for the Games.<sup>179</sup> The homeless experienced a great deal of harassment from police officers. Similarly, there was growing fear among low-income communities that the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) would remove the poor from shopping districts and middle-income communities.<sup>180</sup> According to David Eby, Executive Director of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association and a DTES resident, police harassment included ticketing the homeless for minor offences such as spitting, jaywalking, biking without a helmet, and street vending.<sup>181</sup> These minor offences were often overlooked several years.<sup>182</sup> In 2009, the VPD also released their annual Business Plan which promised a greater crackdown on crime, including multiple street checks in the DTES, increases in ticketing, and limiting the access of repeat offenders to certain parts of the city.<sup>183</sup>

The peak in the crackdown on low-income and homeless DTES residents by the VPD occurred during the two-week period of the Olympic Games.<sup>184</sup> The VPD created a special patrol unit for the DTES called the BEAT Enforcement Team. The team consisted of fourteen VPD officers on patrol 24 hours a day for the two-week duration of the Games.<sup>185</sup> Although the RCMP's Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit (V2010-ISU) was responsible for overseeing the overall security plan for the Games, the BEAT Enforcement Team was responsible for overseeing security only in the DTES.<sup>186</sup> Homeless DTES youth were red-zoned by the VPD from certain areas around Olympic venues and events.<sup>187</sup>

Two months following the conclusion of the Games, city officials voted to keep only half of the promised amount of social housing, turning the other half into market housing catering to Vancouver's civil servants.<sup>188</sup> As predicted, renting, in addition to purchasing property, proved difficult for even Vancouver's middle class citizens. In April 2011, it was reported that 340 market units had yet to be sold and the city was \$700 million in debt. Scherer speculated that even if all market units were sold, Vancouver was estimated to lose at least \$230 million.<sup>189</sup>

Across a backdrop of homelessness in the Olympics and a history of homelessness in Vancouver, it is questionable whether Vancouver's choice to host the Olympic Games was beneficial to the city. Although Vancouver had a great vision to implement socially positive legacies, the social priorities were only second to elite desires of re-development and world-class city ambitions. Therefore, the Vancouver Olympic Games was an exercise of bureaucratic power in order to achieve the aims of politicians, businesspeople, and city planners. Similarly, marginalized populations, such as the homeless in the DTES, were compromised in the process.

## 1.4 Chapter Organization

The second chapter examines how local and provincial ordinances were used to mobilize public spaces for Olympic events and venues. The third chapter analyzes the arguments put forward by advocacy groups regarding the relationship between Olympic Games and homelessness. The fourth and final chapter offers a summary and conclusion, and suggests areas for further research on this topic.

## 1.5 Endnotes

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- <sup>2</sup> Lisa Bornstein, "Mega-projects, City-Building and Community Benefits," *City, Culture and Society* 1 (2010): 202.
- <sup>3</sup> "B.C. may force homeless indoors in cold snaps," *CBC News*, August 30, 2013, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/09/21/bc-homeless-assistance-shelter-law.html>.
- <sup>4</sup> "Protesters say law allows 'kidnapping' of homeless: Intent is to clean up streets for Olympics, say opponents," *CBC News*, August 30, 2013, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/11/25/bc-homeless-legislation-protest.html>.
- <sup>5</sup> Bornstein, "Mega-projects," 202.
- <sup>6</sup> Helen Lenskyj Jefferson, "The Olympic (Affordable) Housing Legacy and Social Responsibility," *Eighth International Symposium for Olympic Research* (2006): 192. Jacqueline Kennelly and Paul Watt, "Sanitizing Public Space in Olympic Host Cities: The Spatial Experiences of Marginalized Youth in 2010 Vancouver and 2012 London," *Sociology* 45, no. 5 (2011): 774.
- <sup>7</sup> Refer to Bornstein, "Mega-projects."
- <sup>8</sup> J.R. Brent Ritchie, "Assessing the Impact of Hallmark Events: Conceptual and Research issues," *Journal of Travel Research* 23, no. 1 (1984): 2, quoted in Gary Cox, "Human Rights: Faster, Higher, Stronger...But What About our Rights? Human Rights and Hallmark Events," *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 16, no. 3 (1998): 177.
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- <sup>10</sup> John Horne and Wolfram Manzenreiter, "An Introduction to the Sociology of Sports Mega-events," *The Sociological Review* 54, no. 2 (2006): 1.
- <sup>11</sup> Helen Jefferson Lenskyj, *Inside the Olympic Industry: Power, Politics, and Activism* (Albany: State University of New York, 2000), 94. Cox, "Human Rights," 47. Patrizia Zagnoli and Elena Radicchi, "Do Major Sports Events Enhance Tourism Destinations?," *Physical Culture and Sport Studies and Research* 47, (2009): 47.
- <sup>12</sup> Hyun Bang Shin, "Life in the Shadow of Mega-events: Beijing Summer Olympiad and its Impact on Housing," *Journal of Asian Public Policy* 2, no. 2 (2009): 11.
- <sup>13</sup> Leo Jago, Larry Dwyer, Geoffrey Lipman, Daneel van Lill, and Shaun Vorster, "Optimising the Potential of Mega-events: An Overview," *International Journal of Event and Festival Management* 1, no. 3 (2010): 222.
- <sup>14</sup> Bjorn Surborg, Rob VanWynsberghe and Elvin Wyly, "Mapping the Olympic Growth Machine: Transnational Urbanism and the Growth Machine Diaspora," *City* 12, no. 3 (2008): 345.
- <sup>15</sup> Udesch Pillay and Orli Bass, "Mega-events as a Response to Poverty Reduction: The 2010 FIFA World Cup and its Urban Development Implications." *Urban Forum*, no. 19 (2008): 124.
- <sup>16</sup> Zagnoli and Radicchi, "Do Major," 48.
- <sup>17</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 98.
- <sup>18</sup> Bornstein, "Mega-projects," 199.
- <sup>19</sup> David Black, "The Symbolic Politics of Sport Mega-Events: 2010 in Comparative Perspective," *Politikon* 34, no. 3 (2007): 262.
- <sup>20</sup> Shin, "Life in the Shadow," 125.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> Cox, "Human Rights," 76.
- <sup>23</sup> John R. Gold and Margaret M. Gold, *Olympic Cities: City Agendas, Planning, and the World's Games, 1896-2012* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 151.
- <sup>24</sup> Helen Jefferson Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry Resistance: Challenging Olympic Power and Propaganda* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 15.
- <sup>25</sup> Katherine McCallum, Amy Spencer, and Elvin K. Wyly, "The City as an Image-creation Machine: A Critical Analysis of Vancouver's Olympic Bid," *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers* 67, (2005): 28.
- <sup>26</sup> Gold and Gold, *Olympic Cities*, 11.
- <sup>27</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 2.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid, 3.
- <sup>29</sup> Bornstein, "Mega-projects," 200.
- <sup>30</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 784; Gold and Gold, *Olympic Cities*, 6.
- <sup>31</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 784.
- <sup>32</sup> Bornstein, "Mega-projects," 200 and 202.
- <sup>33</sup> Christopher Van Veen, "A World Class Façade: Public Discourse and Social Policy Repercussions of Vancouver's 2010 Olympic Games," *Canadian Review of Social Policy* 62, (2009): 91.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Randall Amster, *Street People and the Contested Realms of Public Space* (New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC, 2004), 117.

<sup>36</sup> Laura Huey, *Invisible Victims: Homelessness and the Growing Security Gap* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 4. Ray Forrest, "The New Landscape of Precariousness" in Patricia Kennett and Alex Marsh, eds., *Homelessness: Exploring the New Terrain* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 1999), 17.

<sup>37</sup> Huey, *Invisible Victims*, 4.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

<sup>39</sup> Amster, *Street People*, 109.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> Huey, *Invisible Victims*, 20.

<sup>42</sup> Alex Marsh and Patricia Kennett, "Exploring the New Terrain" in Patricia Kennett and Alex Marsh, eds., *Homelessness: Exploring the New Terrain* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 1999), 4.

<sup>43</sup> Ray Forrest, "Precariousness" in Kennett and Marsh, eds., *Homelessness*, 18.

<sup>44</sup> "Definition of **home** in English," Oxford Dictionaries, Oxford Dictionaries: The World's Most Trusted Dictionaries, accessed August 30, 2013, <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/home?q=home>.

<sup>45</sup> UN Habitat, *Human Rights: The Right to Adequate Housing, Fact Sheet No. 21* (Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009): 1.

<sup>46</sup> This definition of homelessness is by no means a complete definition. Any biases or opinions found are as a result of my personal opinions and understandings of homelessness.

<sup>47</sup> "Canadian Definition of Homelessness," Canadian Homelessness Research Network, accessed August 30, 2013, <http://homelessresearch.net/canadian-definition-of-homelessness/>.

<sup>48</sup> I've chosen to include the last category of individuals in the definition because the human rights of the individual were violated and the individual may have no attachment to the new area of relocation. Individuals displaced through forceful evictions are an example those in the last category.

<sup>49</sup> Huey, *Invisible Victims*, 16-17.

<sup>50</sup> Huey, *Invisible Victims*, 16-17.

<sup>51</sup> Patricia Kennett, "Homelessness, Citizenship, and Social Exclusion," in Kennett and Marsh, eds., *Homelessness*, 39.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>53</sup> Huey, *Invisible Victims*, 15.

<sup>54</sup> Kennett, "Homelessness, Citizenship," in Kennett and Marsh, eds., *Homelessness*, 43.

<sup>55</sup> Kennett, "Homelessness, Citizenship," Kennett and Marsh, eds., *Homelessness*, 47.

<sup>56</sup> Sonia Hirt, *Iron Curtains: Gates, Suburbs, and Privatization of Space in the Post-Socialist City* (Hoboken: Wiley & Sons, 2012), 14. Amster, *Street People*, 50.

<sup>57</sup> Sonia Hirt, *Iron Curtains: Gates, Suburbs, and Privatization of Space in the Post-Socialist City* (Hoboken: Wiley & Sons, 2012), 15.

<sup>58</sup> Amster, *Street People*, 50.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 49.

<sup>60</sup> Lofland uses the concept of 'home territory', in which sections of a city may be "defined as belonging to another racial, ethnic, or class grouping" which may deter certain types of people (e.g., women, Jews, blacks) to be present in public space at certain times. Amster, *Street People*, 48. Lyn Lofland, "The Urban Milieu: Locales, Public Sociability, and Moral Concern," in *Social Organization and Social Process: Essays in Honor of Anselm Strauss*. Ed. D. Maines (Hawthorne: Aldine de Gruyter, 1991), 191-192.

<sup>61</sup> Amster, *Street People*, 114.

<sup>62</sup> I created this definition with the help of Sonia Hirt and Randall Amster's work.

<sup>63</sup> I'd like to express my interpretation on Hirt's definition of 'private space'. I appreciate how she used the phrase "material or non-material impediments". For the purposes of this paper, material impediments includes locks, fences, walls, and other objects which physically restricts an individual from occupying a space. Non-material impediments are variable but socially powerful phenomena such as security forces, environments, and real estate values. For example, a wealthy country club is reputable for attracting wealthy clients. Individuals of lesser circumstance may not consider entering such a space, for there is a reputation of exclusivity based on class and wealth. Hirt, *Iron Curtain*, 15.

<sup>64</sup> Amster's definition of privatized space is crucial to this thesis because the homeless are always the 'undesirables' that private elites choose to exclude.

- <sup>65</sup> Lisa Kim Davis, "International Events and Mass Evictions: A Longer View," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 3 (2011): 538.
- <sup>66</sup> Cox, "Human Rights," 180.
- <sup>67</sup> Libby Porter, "Planning Displacement: The Real Legacy of Major Sporting Events," *Planning Theory & Practice* 10, no. 3 (2009): 395.
- <sup>68</sup> Porter, "Planning Displacement," 397.
- <sup>69</sup> Amster, *Street People*, 50.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>71</sup> Ray Forrest, "Precariousness," in Kennett and Marsh, eds., *Homelessness*, 33.
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid, 59.
- <sup>74</sup> Amster, *Street People*, 50.
- <sup>75</sup> Cox, "Human Rights," 178.
- <sup>76</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 108.
- <sup>77</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 108.
- <sup>78</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 7.
- <sup>79</sup> Jacqueline Kennelly and Paul Watt, "Sanitizing Public Space in Olympic Host Cities: The Spatial Experiences of Marginalized Youth in 2010 Vancouver and 2012 London," *Sociology* 45, no. 5 (2011): 774.
- <sup>80</sup> Marguerite Senecal, "'Olympic victims hotel' shelters city's homeless," *Montreal Gazette*, July 3, 1976.
- <sup>81</sup> Senecal, "Olympic victims
- <sup>82</sup> This piece and the piece in the next footnote are one in three pieces by the *Globe and Mail*, that I've found addressing the Montreal school squatters: "By golly!," *The Globe and Mail*, July 27, 1976.
- <sup>83</sup> Refer to comment above: Dick Beddoes, "What price pageantry?," *The Globe and Mail*, July 19, 1976.
- <sup>84</sup> Similar events were documented on the publications of July 21<sup>st</sup> and July 28<sup>th</sup>.
- <sup>85</sup> The following information about the physical conditions of school squatters can be found: "School squatters running out of food", *The Montreal Gazette*, July 15, 1976.
- <sup>86</sup> "Village has no leftovers, chef tells welfare homeless", *The Montreal Gazette*, July 16, 1976.
- <sup>87</sup> Surprising, this piece of information was one of the only publications from *The Globe and Mail* regarding the school squatters in the 1976 Montreal Olympics. However, I believe attention was only drawn to it because it coincided with the start of the Games. Found here: "Village disputes claim that food being wasted", *The Globe and Mail*, July 17, 1976.
- <sup>88</sup> Michelle Morissette, "Squatters peaceful in school exodus," August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1976.
- <sup>89</sup> Michelle Morissette, "Squatters peaceful in school exodus," August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1976.
- <sup>90</sup> Cox, "Human Rights," 178; Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 112.
- <sup>91</sup> Davis, "International Events," 586.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid, 588.
- <sup>93</sup> Davis, "International Events," 587.
- <sup>94</sup> Davis, "International Events," 587.
- <sup>95</sup> Ibid, 588.
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>97</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>98</sup> Ibid, 590.
- <sup>99</sup> Under the direction of Kim Dong-won, Sanggye-down Olympic was filmed and produced in 1988 to detail the struggle and eventual displacement of hundreds of Sanggyedong residents. "50 Independent Films," Korean Film Archive, accessed August 30, 2013, [http://www.koreafilm.org/feature/50\\_20.asp](http://www.koreafilm.org/feature/50_20.asp).
- <sup>100</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 112.
- <sup>101</sup> Davis, "International Events," 591.
- <sup>102</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 113.
- <sup>103</sup> Lisa Kim Davis, "International Events and Mass Evictions: A Longer View," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 3 (2011).
- <sup>104</sup> Helen Jefferson Lenskyj, *Inside the Olympic Industry: Power, Politics, and Activism* (Albany: State University of New York, 2000).
- <sup>105</sup> Ibid, 117.
- <sup>106</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>107</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 117.

- <sup>108</sup> Ibid, 114.
- <sup>109</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 115-116.
- <sup>110</sup> Ibid, 112. Lenskyj, *Industry Resistance*, 43.
- <sup>111</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 133.
- <sup>112</sup> Ibid, 134.
- <sup>113</sup> Ibid, 135.
- <sup>114</sup> Ibid, 136.
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>116</sup> Lenskyj, *Olympic Industry*, 136.
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>118</sup> Ibid, 138.
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid, 134.
- <sup>120</sup> Ibid, 139.
- <sup>121</sup> Helen Jefferson Lenskyj, *The Best Olympics Ever? Social Impacts of Sydney 2000* (Albany: State University of New York, 2002), 102.
- <sup>122</sup> Lenskyj, *Best Olympics*, 103.
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>124</sup> Ibid, 104.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>126</sup> Ibid, 105.
- <sup>127</sup> Lenskyj, *Best Olympics*, 106.
- <sup>128</sup> Lenskyj, *Industry Resistance*, 40.
- <sup>129</sup> Ibid, 41.
- <sup>130</sup> Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), *One World, Whose Dream?: Housing Rights and Violations and the Beijing Olympic Games* (Geneva: The Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, 2008), 6.
- <sup>131</sup> COHRE, *One World*, 6.
- <sup>132</sup> Ibid, 7.
- <sup>133</sup> Ibid, 12.
- <sup>134</sup> Ibid, 14.
- <sup>135</sup> COHRE, *One World*, 15.
- <sup>136</sup> Ibid, 7.
- <sup>137</sup> Nathan Edelson, "Inclusivity as an Olympic Event at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games," *Urban Geography* 32, no. 6 (2011): 810.
- <sup>138</sup> The Southeast False Creek area is directly across from the Expo '86 venues made thirty years prior.
- <sup>139</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 785.
- <sup>140</sup> Milena M. Parent, Christian Rouillard, and Becca Leopkey, "Issues and Strategies Pertaining to the Canadian Governments' Coordination Efforts in Relation to the 2010 Olympic Games," *European Sport Management Quarterly* 11, no. 4 (2011): 354.
- <sup>141</sup> Edelson, "Inclusivity," 807.
- <sup>142</sup> "The Agreement," Vancouver Agreement, accessed August 30, 2013, <http://www.vancouveragreement.ca/the-agreement/>.
- <sup>143</sup> "The Agreement," Vancouver Agreement, accessed August 30, 2013, <http://www.vancouveragreement.ca/the-agreement/>.
- <sup>144</sup> Bornstein, "Mega-projects," 202.
- <sup>145</sup> Edelson, "Inclusivity," 810.
- <sup>146</sup> Edelson, "Inclusivity," 810.
- <sup>147</sup> There are many short forms for the Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement. It is commonly referred to as ICI, ICICS, and ICS. I have chosen ICI because it is most commonly used.
- <sup>148</sup> Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation, *2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement* (Vancouver: Vancouver-Whistler 2010 Bid Corporation, 2002): 3.
- <sup>149</sup> Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation, *2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement* (Vancouver: Vancouver-Whistler 2010 Bid Corporation, 2002): 3.
- <sup>150</sup> David Eby, "Closing Ceremonies: How Law, Policy and the Winter Olympics are Displacing an Inconveniently Located Low-Income Community in Vancouver," *Planning Theory & Practice* 10, no. 3 (2009): 411.
- <sup>151</sup> Edelson, "Inclusivity," 813.



- <sup>152</sup> Ibid, 814.
- <sup>153</sup> All prices regarding the Vancouver Games bid or construction projects are in Canadian Dollars.
- <sup>154</sup> Bidding \$170 million for the project, CEO Li Ka Shing of Concord Pacific was beaten out by a bid of \$23 million higher. VANOC's president and CEO of Concern Properties, Jack Poole was also a competitive candidate but pulled out after the CEO was questioned of a conflict in interest. Surborg, VanWynsberghe and Wylie, "Mapping", 351.
- <sup>155</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 785.
- <sup>156</sup> Ibid, 786.
- <sup>157</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>158</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 786.
- <sup>159</sup> Lenskyj, *Industry Resistance*, 59.
- <sup>160</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>161</sup> Philip Boyle and Kevin D. Haggerty, "Civil Cities and Urban Governance: Regulating Disorder for the Vancouver Winter Olympics," *Urban Studies* 48, no. 15 (2011): 3185-3186.
- <sup>162</sup> City of Vancouver and Mayor Sam Sullivan, *Project Civil City* (Vancouver: City of Vancouver, 2006), 7.
- <sup>163</sup> Ibid, 8-10.
- <sup>164</sup> Boyle and Haggerty, "Civil Cities," 3187.
- <sup>165</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 787.
- <sup>166</sup> Ibid, 789.
- <sup>167</sup> Ibid, 789.
- <sup>168</sup> According to the City of Vancouver, the Property Endowment Fund is a fund to "maintain or increase the City's ownership of strategic land in the City of Vancouver; to support the City's planning and development objectives; and to produce a reasonable return on the City's investment in properties consistent with the City's planning and development objectives." "Vancouver (B.C.). Property Endowment Fund Board," City of Vancouver Archives, accessed August 30, 2013, <http://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/vancouver-b-c-property-endowment-fund-board>. Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 788.
- <sup>169</sup> According to the Bill, "development project" refers to the area of the city "bounded on the north by False Creek, on the south by the southerly boundary of 1st Avenue, on the east by the easterly boundary of Ontario Street and that boundary's northerly production to False Creek, and on the west by the westerly boundary of Columbia Street and that boundary's northerly production to False Creek." Bill 49 – 2009: Vancouver Charter Amendment Act, R.S.C. ch. 55, s.190.1 (1) (2009). Retrieved from: [http://www.leg.bc.ca/38th4th/1st\\_read/gov47-1.htm](http://www.leg.bc.ca/38th4th/1st_read/gov47-1.htm)
- <sup>170</sup> Bill 49 – 2009: Vancouver Charter Amendment Act, R.S.C. ch. 55, s.190.1(2)(e) (2009).
- <sup>171</sup> Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, *2006/2007 Report 2- The Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games* (Victoria: Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia, 2006), 5.
- <sup>172</sup> Ibid, 41.
- <sup>173</sup> Ibid, 46.
- <sup>174</sup> Shaw, *Five Ring Circus*, 6. Van Veen, "World Class Façade," 91.
- <sup>175</sup> Van Veen, "World Class Façade," 91.
- <sup>176</sup> Ibid, 93.
- <sup>177</sup> Shantz, "Olympic Challenge," 74.
- <sup>178</sup> Eby, "Closing Ceremonies," 412.
- <sup>179</sup> Edelson, "Inclusivity," 816. Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation, *Vancouver 2010 Bid Book*, vol.3, *Security* (Vancouver: Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation, 2003), 31. Vancouver Police Department, *2009 Annual Business Plan* (Vancouver: Vancouver Police Department, 2009), 13.
- <sup>180</sup> Edelson, "Inclusivity," 816.
- <sup>181</sup> Eby, "Closing Ceremonies," 412.
- <sup>182</sup> Vancouver Police Department, "VPD Recognized for 2010 Winter Olympics," *Beyond the Call* 7, no.1 (2011), 1.
- <sup>183</sup> Eby, "Closing Ceremonies," 412.
- <sup>184</sup> Eby, "Closing Ceremonies," 411.
- <sup>185</sup> Will Small, Andrea Krusi, Evan Wood, Julio Montaner, and Thomas Kerr, "Street-level policing in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, Canada, during the 2010 winter Olympics," *International Journal of Drug Policy* 23 (2013): 130.
- <sup>186</sup> Small, Krusi, Wood, Montaner, and Kerr, "Street-level," 132.
- <sup>187</sup> Kennelly and Watt, "Sanitized Space," 772.

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<sup>188</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 790.

<sup>189</sup> Scherer, "Olympic Villages," 790.

## Chapter 2

### 2 Public Policy, Legislation, and the 2010 Olympics

This chapter examines the policies and legislation cited primarily by critics and newspaper sources as a catalyst to the exacerbation of homelessness in the lead-up to and hosting of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games. In this chapter, I provide a descriptive analysis of how specific ordinances cleared the homeless off the streets through coercion and arrest, while other ordinances failed to protect tenants against Olympic-related evictions and rent increases.

Specifically, this chapter examines 1) the *Standards of Maintenance By-law*, 2) the *Residential Tenancy Act*, 3) the *Single Room Accommodation By-Law*, 4) the *Project Civil City*, and 5) the *Assistance to Shelter Act*. Although these ordinances were created at different times and for different purposes, their time of enactment along with the preservation of existing ordinances played a crucial role in how homelessness was exacerbated before and throughout the Olympic Games.

A brief summary of each is as follows: The *Standards of Maintenance By-law*, *Residential Tenancy Act*, and *Single Residential Accommodation By-law* each regulated the creation and occupation of residential buildings in Vancouver and were criticized for allowing unwarranted Olympic evictions to occur because of various loopholes in the legislation. The loopholes occurred because the regulations lacked specificity and accountability, thereby allowing landlords to find other avenues to evict tenants and convert buildings without violating the legislation. *Project Civil City* was a public policy initiative aimed at reducing public disorder by increasing police presence and enforcement in preparation for the Olympic Games, and was

criticized as a way for police to clear the homeless off the streets through fines and arrests. The *Assistance to Shelter Act* authorized police to coerce homeless individuals into shelters in severely cold weather. Similar to *Project Civil City*, the *Assistance to Shelter Act* was criticized as a way for the police to remove homeless individuals from the street by use of force. Each public document is examined separately below. Figure 1 provides a summary of this information.



**Figure 1: Timeline of the policies and legislations that affected homelessness for the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games.**

## 2.1 Standards of Maintenance By-law

The *Standards of Maintenance Bylaw* (SoM) was first published on July 21, 1981 by the City of Vancouver. The purpose of the SoM was to prescribe “standards for maintenance and occupancy of building sites within the City of Vancouver to ensure that such buildings and sites were free from hazard and were maintained continuously in conformity with accepted health, fire

and building requirements.”<sup>1</sup> The SoM was initially drafted because the provincial government received feedback from tenants “frustrated by the sub-standard and deteriorating housing conditions in which they found themselves”<sup>2</sup> and was established to ensure that governments provided guidelines to “protect [Single Room Occupancy hotels] from premature demolition.”<sup>3</sup>

The SoM exacerbated the state of homelessness in Vancouver for two reasons. First, the SoM failed to protect tenants from eviction because the regulations were poorly defined and lacked specificity regarding a timeline to action. Landlords often allowed SRO buildings (the last possible resort for housing) to deteriorate. When found in violation of the City’s codes of maintenance, the SoM allowed landlords to evict tenants on the basis of restoration or repair. However, following restoration, property owners rented out the units at higher rental rates to tourists. Second, although the SoM was created to allow the City to repair or restore property without the owner’s permission, the City repeatedly opted to close down buildings instead. Together, these two factors contributed to the exacerbation of homelessness in the lead-up to the Olympic Games.

The SoM outlined the conditions of maintenance for residential properties and the provisions for which the by-law applied.<sup>4</sup> It required all grounds to be clean from rubbish and accessible for passage, and enclosures such as fences had to be kept in good condition.<sup>5</sup> Walls and buildings were not to “become infested with pests.”<sup>6</sup> If the SoM was violated, landlords were required to fix the units, which included installing or replacing utilities and repairing all foundation<sup>7</sup> and exterior walls,<sup>8</sup> doors, windows,<sup>9</sup> and roofing.<sup>10</sup> Maintenance also included aesthetic changes to buildings, such as painting and restoration.<sup>11</sup> A reasonable timeline to action was not provided in the document.

In the event that an “unsafe condition” was discovered, the SoM stated that “the applicable provisions of the *Vancouver Building By-law* shall apply.”<sup>12</sup> The *Vancouver Building By-law* stated, “all unsafe conditions shall require correction to an acceptable level.”<sup>13</sup> Specifically, “any condition that could cause undue hazard or risk to life, limb or health of any person authorized, expected or anticipated to be on or about the premises shall be corrected as required by the Chief Building Official.”<sup>14</sup> Although the Chief Building Official or other City employees had the right to conduct repairs and bill the landlord for all maintenance fees, critics noted that the City repeatedly chose to close down SROs instead.<sup>15</sup> These closures gave landlords and property owners the opportunity to evict all tenants and to renovate or convert the property for tourist use.

The SoM also provided the regulations for maintenance in lodging houses. The SoM defined “lodging house” as “any building or separate portion thereof with three or more units or rooms” which included “a hotel, a motel, apartment building, rooming house, boarding house, bed and breakfast accommodation, and a multi-use building containing any combination of sleeping units, housekeeping units, or dwelling units.”<sup>16</sup> A sleeping unit consisted of “one or more rooms equipped to be used for sleeping and sitting purposes.”<sup>17</sup> A housekeeping unit was “a sleeping unit containing a sink and facilities for cooking.”<sup>18</sup> Most SROs were considered to be sleeping units, whereas apartment units were usually considered housekeeping units. Lodging units had to provide hot water, refrigeration, laundry and washing machines, adequate natural light, constant ventilation, garbage disposal, and adequate heating. Importantly, every lodging house was required to have “at least one hand basin for every three sleeping units,”<sup>19</sup> “at least one water closet for every ten sleeping units,”<sup>20</sup> and “at least one bathing unit for every twelve sleeping units.”<sup>21</sup> However, the City often failed to keep SRO owners accountable to

these standards. As mentioned in Chapter 1, some SRO hotels had ninety units to one bath and sink unit. Furthermore, every lodging house was required to provide clean and sanitary living conditions and ensure furnishings were in good repair. According to the SoM, “the City Building Inspector may order any lodger occupying accommodation to restore such accommodation to a clean and sanitary condition, or vacate such accommodation within the time specified by the City Building Inspector.”<sup>22</sup> It was unclear as to when the City Building Inspector conducted inspections and how long an evacuation would last. As will be discussed in Section 2.3, *Single Room Accommodation By-Law*, there was no standard for accountability between the landlord and tenant regarding the secured return of the tenant. Therefore, in the lead-up to the Olympic Games, landlords evicted tenants on the basis of renovation with no promise of return.<sup>23</sup>

The significance of the SoM lies in how its vaguely defined terms and conditions permitted landlords to convert or demolish buildings for tourist use, or to evict tenants with the intent of renting the units at a higher price to Olympic tourists. Although the SoM was put in place to decrease evictions by allowing the City to conduct repairs on demand, SROs were closed by the City at an alarming rate. As mentioned in Chapter 1, over 1,400 subsidized housing units were lost between the Olympic bid victory and the Olympic Games. The SoM was a poor intervention for the cessation of eviction and exacerbated the problem instead. As such, the SoM is a good illustration of how Olympic-related evictions were not caused by Olympic organizing committees or the Olympic Games, but by loopholes in, and poor enforcement of, existing public policies. In other words, it was the lucrative potential of the Games that led landlords to exploit the SoM, combined with the City’s lack of oversight of the policy, that made the SoM an ineffective tool for addressing the need to preserve and protect low-income housing in a mega-event city like Vancouver.

## 2.2 Residential Tenancy Act

The *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA) was last updated by the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia in 2002.<sup>24</sup> Divided into seven parts, the RTA contained 10 sections that outlined the factors and processes of a lawful tenancy agreement. Although the RTA was created to ensure equity, critics noted the power imbalances that existed between landlords and tenants that gave landlords greater leeway to evict tenants. Termed by critics as “renovictions,” last-minute eviction notices were issued to tenants for building renovations.<sup>25</sup> Tenants who wished to appeal the eviction notices were permitted to bring their case to arbitration meetings. However, the appeal process often privileged the landlord instead of the tenant because of the time and costs involved, as explained in Section 2.2.4 and 2.2.5.<sup>26</sup>

### 2.2.1 Introduction of Provisions and Administration

The first part of the RTA outlined the general definition of all terms, the context and populations to which the agreement applied, the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants, and the consequences for breaking the agreement. The RTA extended to tenancy agreements, single resident accommodation rental units, and other residential properties.<sup>27</sup> Private housing, travel accommodation, and not-for-profit accommodation did not fall under the RTA.<sup>28</sup> It also outlined the duties of the administrative officer or director responsible for overseeing the RTA. The director, or the appointed delegate, had the power to establish rules and make decisions regarding the RTA and tenancy agreements. To be discussed in Section 2.2.5, the director also played an important role in resolving disputes between landlords and tenants.



## 2.2.2 Residential Tenancies

The second part of the RTA addressed the rights and obligations of tenants and landlords under tenancy agreements. Legally-binding tenancy agreements were created through a formal and standardized process and were required to meet a set of prescribed requirements as laid out by the RTA.<sup>29</sup> The RTA mentioned other details regarding the procedures that took place at the start of a tenancy, as well as specific circumstances under which changes to tenancy agreements could be made.<sup>30</sup> The landlord was not to terminate a service if “the service or facility is essential to the tenant’s use of the rental unit as living accommodation.”<sup>31</sup> The landlord was obligated to provide and maintain residential space which “complies with the health, safety and housing standards required by law, and ...makes it suitable for occupation.”<sup>32</sup> If the health and safety of the tenant was in danger due to the rental unit, “emergency repairs” had to be made.<sup>33</sup> Emergency repairs were required when damages such as major leaks, damaged water or sewer pipes, broken heating systems, and damaged electrical systems occurred.<sup>34</sup> In other words, “emergency repairs” were last-minute restorations that allowed SRO owners to immediately vacate tenants from their living units if necessary. The health and housing standards of SROs were already poorly enforced by the City, and the lack of accountability between the City and SRO owners allowed many SROs to be ill-maintained until emergency repairs had to be conducted.

## 2.2.3 Rent Increases

The third part of the RTA outlined the maximum allowable rent increase and the timing of issuance. For instance, a landlord “must not impose a rent increase for at least 12 months”<sup>35</sup> and “must give a tenant notice of a rent increase at least 3 months before the effective date of the

increase.”<sup>36</sup> According to the Residential Tenancy Branch, the maximum allowable rent increase between the 2004 and 2010 in Vancouver was 4.6%.<sup>37</sup> Table 1 details the historical maximum allowable rent increase in Vancouver between those years. The Residential Tenancy Branch also noted, “Landlords may not retroactively apply a rent increase or catch-up on rent increases if they did not issue a rent increase in a previous year.”<sup>38</sup> Although the allowable rent increase dropped from 2004 to 2010, some landlords raised rents 80% to 100% higher than the original rate in the lead-up to the Games.<sup>39</sup> These rental hikes contravened the RTA, which clearly outlined the legal limit for such units: “A landlord may impose a rent increase only up to the amount ...calculated in accordance with the regulations.”<sup>40</sup> However, the numbers from Table 1 were nowhere to be found in the RTA or the *Residential Tenancy Regulation*. Instead, this information was published in a separate one-page document by the Residential Tenancy Branch.<sup>41</sup> To be explored in Chapter 3, critics noted that rent increases were one way that landlords took advantage of the RTA to exploit their tenants because rent increases were applicable to the tenant and not the unit.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, when a tenant left, the landlord could adjust the rental rate for the incoming, higher paying tenant. This exacerbated homelessness in the lead-up to the Olympic Games because rent increases meant there were less affordable housing units for low-income citizens.

Year	Maximum Allowable Rent Increase
2004	4.6%
2005	3.8%
2006	4.0%
2007	4.0%

<b>2008</b>	3.7%
<b>2009</b>	3.7%
<b>2010</b>	3.2%

**Table 1: Maximum allowable rent increases in Vancouver between 2004 and 2010.**<sup>43</sup>

## 2.2.4 Ending a Tenancy

The landlord was permitted to submit a notice of termination if a tenant failed to pay rent, failed to maintain living premises, or was perceived to be a cause of harm to other tenants. Landlords could also submit an application to end a tenancy when “the rental unit is uninhabitable.”<sup>44</sup> If a landlord had the necessary permit approved by law, the landlord was permitted to end a tenancy so as to renovate or sell the building. With a permit, a landlord could issue an eviction notice “not earlier than 2 months after the date the tenant receives the notice,” and the notice must be issued “the day before the day in the month... that rent is payable.”<sup>45</sup> An exception to this time frame was when emergency repairs had to be made. Since the nature of emergency repairs was urgent, landlords were given the power to immediately vacate tenants to commence repairs without the permission of the City. Therefore, critics criticized the RTA for allowing landlords to find alternate avenues to evict tenants. Critics condemned this practice of “renovictions” because many landlords issued last-minute eviction notices, leaving tenants without a place to live.<sup>46</sup> After tenants were evicted and renovations were completed, property owners increased the rent to cover renovation costs and generate more profit. Even with established regulations guiding the process for rent increases, large rent hikes beyond the maximum allowable rate still occurred. In one Vancouver apartment that was renovated in 2008, residents who wanted to return to their units experienced a rent hike of 80% to 100%.<sup>47</sup> The

maximum allowable rent increase for that year was 3.7%. The practice of renovations thus highlighted the unequal power struggle between landlord and tenants because it provided landlords with an easy opportunity to evict tenants to profit from tourist use.

## 2.2.5 Dispute Resolution

The formal procedures for dispute resolution were addressed in the fifth part of the RTA. If a landlord and tenant were in a dispute, the director or appointed substitute supervised the procedure for resolution. In this instance, the director or substitute had the authority to change or determine the rules for rent increases, the amount of compensation for damage, and the landlord's right to enter the rental unit. The process for dispute resolution privileged the landlord and sustained the power imbalance between the both parties because landlords had better access to the legal system, as well as the financial resources to use that system. When a tenant invoked their right to appeal a landlord's decision, both parties entered into a dispute resolution. Following a decision by the director or designate, both parties had the right to appeal for judicial review by the British Columbia Supreme Court. Landlords often used the judicial review as an intimidation tactic in order to deter a tenant from enforcing their rights.

Tenants found the judicial review problematic for two reasons. First, the appeal process was time-consuming and costly. Many, if not most tenants did not have the money to pay for legal representation, and the overall costs for legal fees were usually significantly higher than what was awarded to the tenant.<sup>48</sup> Second, there were a number of risks associated with the judicial review. Usually, tenants did not have the money to pay for losses if the case was ruled in the landlord's favour. Furthermore, there was no mechanism to appeal the outcome of a judicial review; the decision was final.<sup>49</sup> Although the RTA was designed to protect tenants from

evictions, the appeal process placed tenants in a vulnerable position because it required them to take a financial risk they already could not afford. Therefore, this process further consolidated the power imbalance between the landlord and tenant because it favoured the party with the most social, political, and economic resources.

## 2.2.6 Significance

The RTA failed to protect tenants from Olympic-related evictions for two main reasons. On the one hand, low-income residents experienced unwarranted evictions because landlords were permitted to evict tenants for renovations. Following renovations, tenants were expected to rent the same units at substantially higher rates. As such, tenants found themselves homeless following eviction because they could not afford the new rates. On the other hand, dispute resolution often placed tenants in a position of disadvantage because they did not have sufficient funds to enter into the judicial review, and landlords used the judicial review as leverage against further appeals from tenants. The RTA reinforced the fact that marginalized populations often had little financial stability to use the legal process to address their concerns even though the system was designed to protect their interests. In this context, tenants who had little money to afford new housing or to engage in legal battles found themselves in a position of greater vulnerability to experiencing homelessness or financial loss in the lead up to and the throughout the Games.

## 2.3 Single Room Accommodation By-law

The *Single Room Accommodation By-Law* (SRA) came into force on October 21, 2003.<sup>50</sup> The main purpose of the SRA was to regulate the conversion and demolition of single room

accommodations<sup>51</sup> and to prevent homelessness from increasing in the lead-up to the Olympic Games.<sup>52</sup> To put the matter another way, the SRA was City Council's promise to prevent Olympic-related evictions from happening.<sup>53</sup> At the time Vancouver was awarded the rights to host the Games, the conditions of existing SROs in the city were very poor. SROs in the downtown core were nearly a century old and had a variety of structural problems which were "in violation of City Health, Building, Fire and Standard of Maintenance By-laws."<sup>54</sup> Due to these problems, and the escalation of land values in the DTES, many SRO owners could not generate a profit from their property and, thus, turned to alternative sources of revenue, such as conversion of SROs for tourist use.<sup>55</sup> SRO owners were more likely to demolish their properties "for higher value residential redevelopment" or convert their buildings for tourist use "as the international profile of Vancouver" increased as the 2010 Winter Olympics approached.<sup>56</sup>

The SRA was amended six times: 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2013. This chapter will focus on the first five amendments (2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009) published from the time of the by-law's inception in 2003 to the Olympic Games. The SRA opened with a definition of all the key terms, and highlighted the convoluted nature of this (and other) housing by-laws. For instance, "conversion" was defined as a change in occupancy, a change in the nature of the tenancy, a change in the frequency of rent payments, a change in which the designated space is used for a purpose other than to provide living accommodation, a repair which has no material effect on the enjoyment by permanent residents, a reclassification of the building, and a loss of exemption from the *Hotel Room Tax Act*.<sup>57</sup> "Demolition" was defined as the "means to pull, knock, or tear down or to raze, wholly or partially, a designated room."<sup>58</sup> A "designated room" was a single-room accommodation, though not all single-room accommodations were under the jurisdiction of the SRA, such as rooms from hotels, motels, and hostels. To help clarify the

matter, a list of single-room accommodations was provided in a document attached as Schedule A at the end of the by-law.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, every owner was required to post a public notice of designation for every room appointed as a single-room accommodation. The form of designation was appended to the by-law as Schedule B.<sup>60</sup> By publishing specific rooms under the jurisdiction of the SRA, and by making this information publicly known, the procedures were intended to keep SRO owners accountable to the SRA.

The SRA also outlined the regulations for converting or demolishing buildings and the application process for making these changes. An owner was not to convert or demolish a designated room unless they obtained a permit from City Council.<sup>61</sup> Owners were required to outline the reasons for demolition and conversion, and provide tax assessment records, guest ledgers, daily rent receipts, and any other details requested by City Council. In addition to providing these details, the owner was required to pay a non-refundable application fee of \$1000 for the first ten designated rooms that were to undergo demolition or conversion. A fee of \$100 was applied to each additional designated room listed on the application. The maximum fee for all additional designated rooms apart from the initial ten rooms was \$6000.<sup>62</sup> This means that the highest amount that property owners had to pay for the application for conversion was \$16,000. City Council also considered the history of the land and building, as well as the use and occupancy of the building as part of the application process.<sup>63</sup> When all factors were considered, City Council could enforce certain conditions be fulfilled before a permit was issued.<sup>64</sup> If the owner was issued a permit and was given permission to proceed to conversion or demolition, City Council could prescribe eight additional conditions for the owners to follow. These conditions were meant to prevent unwarranted demolition or conversion of SRO buildings. To be explored in Chapter 3, even though the SRA was put in place to prevent the conversion of low-

income housing stock, housing critics found that SROs were decreasing in volume in the lead-up to the Games. The eight conditions are examined below.

First, Council could require the owner to pay \$15,000 towards the “city’s reserve fund for the replacement of replacement housing” as a condition of receiving the permit.<sup>65</sup> Although this initiative was put in place to create more housing stock, critics noted that the City failed to spend the funds to create subsidized housing.<sup>66</sup> Second, the owner could be required to enter into a heritage revitalization agreement or obtain a heritage alteration permit as a condition of receiving a permit.<sup>67</sup> Third, Council could make the owner enter into a covenant with the City to secure the owner’s obligation to follow and comply with the conditions attached to the conversion or demolition permit.<sup>68</sup> Fourth, Council could ask the owner to “execute and deliver to the city any instrument required” and “register such instrument” in the Vancouver/New Westminster Land Title Office.<sup>69</sup> Fifth, Council could permit the owner to rent the designated room to transient guests<sup>70</sup> on the condition the owner located “comparable or better accommodation at a comparable or lesser rent for the permanent resident of the designated room.”<sup>71</sup> In other words, if the owner wanted to rent the room to someone other than the permanent resident, the owner was required to arrange the resident’s relocation, pay for all moving fees, assure Council that the owner would rent the room as a permanent residence during the balance of the year, and arrange the return of the permanent resident afterwards.<sup>72</sup> Owners were not allowed to rent more than 10% of the rooms in a building at any given time.<sup>73</sup> Sixth, Council could allow the owner to repair or convert designated rooms if the owner followed a similar list of criteria as listed in *Section 4.6.e*, which is explained in the following paragraph.<sup>74</sup> Seventh, the owner was also required to allow City employees to inspect the buildings “from time to time and at any reasonable time.”<sup>75</sup> Finally, if an owner was issued a permit with a time limit, the owner was



required to agree to the requirements of “how and when the owner is to restore the applicable designated rooms.”<sup>76</sup> A conversion or demolition permit was usually valid for twelve months from the date of issuance, and the owner was required to carry out the conversion or demolition permit in accordance with the conditions listed on the permit and existing by-laws.<sup>77</sup> If the owner breached the permit or the permit expired, Council could revoke the permit and “the permit holder must not do anything further under the authority of the permit.”<sup>78</sup> As noted, these rules were put in place to prevent owners from dislocating low-income residents in order to demolish and convert their buildings for greater profit.

However, Section 4.6.e and 4.6.f of the SRA are significant because they allowed SRO owners to legally evict tenants providing those tenants were adequately compensated for their losses and given an opportunity to return to their permanent place of residence once conversion was completed. The problem with these sections was that there was no clear mechanism to ensure landlords would compensate the tenants or assist with their return. Furthermore, landlords were not obligated to tell the City what they were doing with the new conversions. As noted in Chapter 1, in the years prior to the start of the Games, many SRO owners evicted their tenants to rent to construction workers completing Olympic infrastructure projects and to journalists covering the Games. Additionally, many SROs were converted or demolished for the purpose of creating new, higher priced accommodations for tourist use.

The last few sections of the by-law detailed the procedures for enforcing the SRA.<sup>79</sup> If a building was found to be in violation of the by-law, the Director of Licenses and Inspections could request the owner to discontinue the conversion or demolition, or carry out work to bring the building in conformity with the by-law.<sup>80</sup> Any building violation meant that the owner could be charged a fine of \$500 to \$2000.<sup>81</sup> A fine of \$50 was issued on a daily basis if the convicted

property owner chose to neglect the offence.<sup>82</sup> Although the SRA's regulations and fines were meant to deter property owners from applying for demolition or conversion, many SROs were closed by the City in the lead up to the Games. SRO owners benefited from these closures and were able to increase their profits by converting their property for tourist use. This is a salient point: SRO owners took advantage of the SRA to convert their buildings for higher income tourist use, while the existing tenants, who ranked among the city's poorest residents, were powerless to challenge their displacement.

## 2.4 Project Civil City

In November 2006, then-Vancouver mayor Sam Sullivan published a thirty-two page document that included a proposal to “address the issue of public disorder” in the City.”<sup>83</sup> The proposal documented a major initiative, *Project Civil City* (PCC), which Sullivan referred to as “a call to action” and involved aggressive tactics targeted at decreasing street disorder and public disarray.<sup>84</sup> To address these issues, the PCC recommended fifty-four initiatives, most of which were already existing, to meet four fundamental goals by 2010. The goals were as listed:

- a) Eliminate homelessness, with at least a 50% reduction by 2010.
- b) Eliminate the open drug market on Vancouver's streets, with at least a 50% reduction by 2010.
- c) Eliminate the incidence of aggressive panhandling with at least a 50% reduction by 2010.
- d) Increase the level of public satisfaction with the City's handling of public nuisance and annoyance complaints by 50% by 2010.<sup>85</sup>

Discussions from roundtable meetings with community leaders, representatives of the provincial and federal government, various administrative officers of the city, and public voices from a

web-based survey regarding public disorder helped to formulate the goals and initiatives outlined in the PCC. In light of my thesis topic, I will focus on the PCC's interventions targeted towards homelessness and public nuisance. Figure 2 provides a timeline of the PCC.

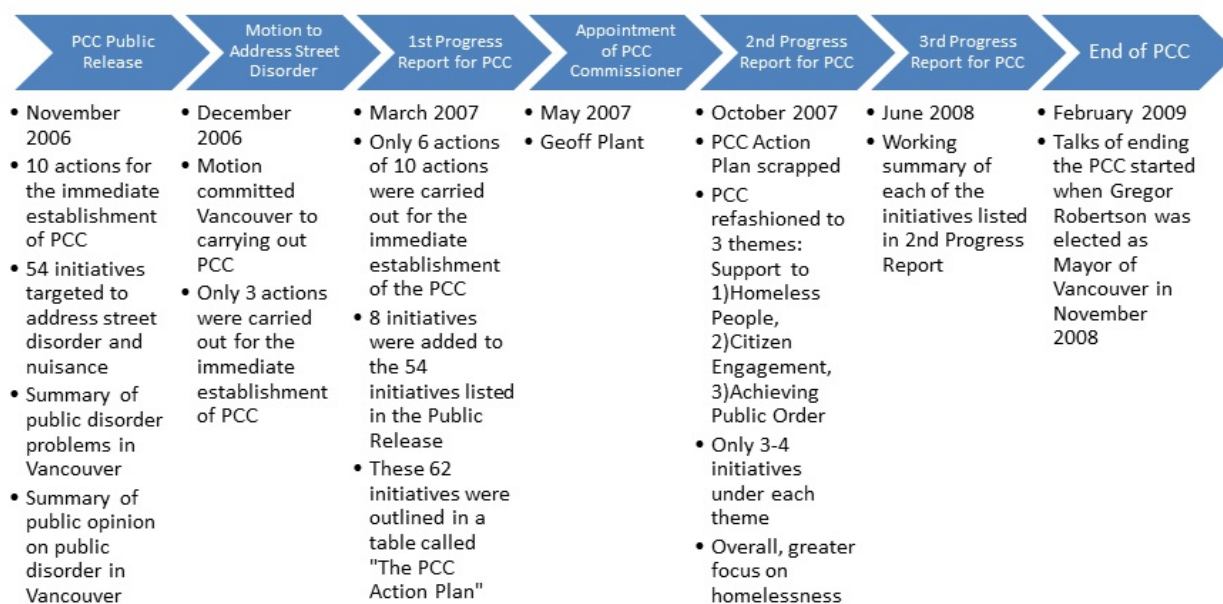
There were four main problems with the PCC. First, the PCC staff did not share Sullivan's intentions to use the Olympic Games as leverage to reach the PCC's goals, with the result that all Olympic-related initiatives were deleted in subsequent drafts of the document. This became more obvious in May 2007 when former MLA member Geoff Plant was appointed the new PCC Commissioner. Much of the project changed under his direction to focus on homelessness and less on policing public disorder. Second, the PCC timeline to consult with multi-levels of governments and departments was ambitious. Public disorder was a problem that had plagued Vancouver for decades, and some politicians were sceptical the PCC would accomplish its goals within the stated timeline.<sup>86</sup> Third, there was really nothing new about the PCC; most of its initiatives were already in place, amalgamated from different projects. As such, the PCC was mostly a public relations tool meant to garner public support for the Games. It was not a new project idea with new resources for addressing long-standing problem in Vancouver. Lastly, poverty advocates and individuals from opposing political parties criticized the PCC from the very start, referring to it as a "targeted crackdown on the most vulnerable in our city, in order to "clean up" Vancouver for international scrutiny during the Olympics."<sup>87</sup> This is an important point because politicians and poverty advocates were already aware of the potential for police to clear the homeless from Vancouver streets in the lead-up to the Games, and many saw the PCC as a tool to reach these objectives. The combination of these factors led to the PCC being withdrawn in 2009.

## 2.4.1 The Public Release of Project Civil City

As noted, the PCC was a public policy project that consisted of fifty-four initiatives to address street disorder. When the PCC was released, ten additional criteria were listed for city and government partners to follow. The first criterion was a recommendation to allocate at least \$1 million dollars from the Olympic Legacy Fund, “to enhance the civic response to nuisance and annoyance complaints.”<sup>88</sup> Three of the criteria dealt with the appointment of a commissioner and several planning committees to implement the PCC. Approximately \$300,000 of public funds went to establish a PCC Implementation Office and hire a PCC Commissioner to lead the project. The remaining six criteria suggested revisions to social programs and policies aimed at reducing street disorder. One even suggested the Vancouver Police Department (VPD) “adopt policies that will increase the street presence of ...existing police forces,”<sup>89</sup> which is now a well-known and well-documented practice undertaken by host cities.

According to Mayor Sullivan, the PCC was “designed to restore the public’s sense of personal safety, promote civic pride and encourage personal responsibility through incremental change.”<sup>90</sup> In doing so, the PCC would help position Vancouver as an optimal city in which to live, work, visit, and invest. As mentioned in Chapter 1, civic elites lured by the slim possibility of reaping various benefits and greater chances at foreign investment, often bid for the rights to

host the Olympic Games. To do so, however, they must sell their city as a world-class city.



**Figure 2: Timeline of the Project Civil City**

The PCC would help facilitate Vancouver's transformation to a city that would attract positive world-wide attention and investment, with the Olympic Games being the mechanism through which to achieve that goal. In the PCC proposal, Sullivan noted, "we have a tremendous opportunity to use the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games as a catalyst to solve the public disorder problems that affect our city."<sup>91</sup> It is interesting to note that the Olympic Legacy Fund was to be used to achieve the PCC goals. In order to rally support for the PCC and the Olympic Games, Sullivan framed the PCC as part of Vancouver's Olympic legacy to solve Vancouver's long-standing problem with public disorder, stating, "we must use these Games to create social and human legacies that will benefit generations to come."<sup>92</sup>

The PCC discussed the root causes of homelessness, the lack of housing, drug addiction, and mental illness, in addition to the fifty-four initiatives already in place to combat these issues.

The document concluded with a summary of public feedback from a web-based survey regarding each issue. Throughout the document, the need to strengthen initiatives aimed at combatting homelessness and civil disorder was noted. As well, it stated that solutions for the eradication of homelessness would be addressed through “housing policy, income policy, support programs, service coordination and housing supply.”<sup>93</sup> Major terms such as, “public disorder,” “public nuisance,” and “public satisfaction” were undefined in the project. Although the PCC had many flaws and was heavily criticized, Sullivan succeeded in convincing the city to invest in the overly-ambitious, poorly-defined project because it was an extension of Vancouver’s Olympic legacy plans. However, the PCC’s claim to reduce public disorder as part of its legacy did not last beyond the first progress report for the project.

## 2.4.2 First PCC Progress Report

On March 27, 2007, the City of Vancouver published the first of three progress reports on the PCC.<sup>94</sup> Of the ten additional criteria listed for immediate execution in the 2007 publication, only six actions were carried out. Of those six actions, only three addressed public disorder issues. Expanding on the fifty-four initiatives, the first progress report added eight initiatives that further addressed street disorder issues in Vancouver, totalling sixty-two initiatives altogether. All sixty-two initiatives were summarized and put into a single document called “Project Civil City Action Plan.”<sup>95</sup>

The Action Plan categorized the initiatives according to the PCC’s four major goals: 1) homelessness, 2) open drug market, 3) aggressive pan-handling, and 4) public nuisance and annoyance complaints. The initiatives were further categorized into three time frames: 1) immediate, 2) mid-term, and 3) long-term goals. Immediate initiatives were projected to take one

year or less to fulfill. Mid-term initiatives were projected to take one to three years to complete. Long-term initiatives were projected to take three to five years to complete. None of the initiatives were new; all had been in place years before the PCC even existed. By committing to sixty-two initiatives, the PCC became even more ambitious. Calculating the time it would take to consult with various departments, it became even more obvious to politicians in opposing parties that the goals would not be reached by 2010.<sup>96</sup>

Of the sixty-two initiatives listed in the Action Plan, fifteen initiatives were identified as immediate goals and had already begun at the time of the report's publication. Of those fifteen initiatives, five addressed plans to reduce homelessness and ten addressed plans to "reduce public nuisance, annoyance complaints, and aggressive panhandling."<sup>97</sup> Of the ten initiatives that dealt with public nuisance, seven involved cleaning public spaces of waste or undesirable images, one addressed public safety concerns, and two dealt with increased police surveillance, ticketing, and fines. As mentioned earlier, many politicians and critics believed the PCC was little more than a crackdown on homeless activity through ticketing and fines, which was true to some degree, since, as will be seen with the *Assistance to Shelter Act*, the police played an integral part in building the world-class city image by clearing the homeless and other marginalized individuals off the streets.

Furthermore, seventeen of the sixty-two initiatives involved investigating and combating homelessness in Vancouver. Despite acknowledging housing policy as a solution to homelessness, only two policies (*Single Resident Accommodation By-law* and *Standards of Maintenance By-Law*) were mentioned once and were not elaborated upon.<sup>98</sup> However, according to critics, there were multiple policies in addition to the *Single Resident*

*Accommodation By-Law* and *Standards of Maintenance By-Law* that exacerbated homelessness in Vancouver. This will be explained in greater detail in Chapter 3.

Finally, forty-two of the sixty-two initiatives addressed issues of public nuisance. Of those forty-two initiatives, two mentioned the need to change unspecified policies, five outlined existing interventions that dealt with different crimes, six dealt with ways to clean the streets of litter, five focused on redesigning city spaces, eight dealt with crime, six addressed enforcement through ticketing and fines, two involved increasing surveillance, and ten outlined the need for greater police presence on the streets. To put the matter another way, seventeen of the sixty-two initiatives dealt with increasing police presence, surveillance, and enforcement in preparation for the Olympics. Although the PCC was instated to reduce public disorder in Vancouver, scholars have noted that previous police initiatives aimed at reducing public nuisance have had a negative impact on marginalized populations in the DTES.<sup>99</sup> This is because marginalized individuals hid from the police for fear of arrest, and their dislocation disrupted their access to social services leading them to engage in illegal activities.<sup>100</sup> It was a vicious cycle of fear, displacement, and disruption for the targets of this policy.

### 2.4.3 Second PCC Progress Report

On October 30, 2007, the second PCC progress report was released. It outlined the appointment of the new PCC Commissioner, Geoff Plant.<sup>101</sup> Although the four fundamental goals of the PCC (homelessness, open drug use, panhandling, and public nuisance) remained unchanged, the sixty-two initiatives proposed in the Action Plan were scrapped. Under Plant's leadership, and with the Action Plan gone, the PCC was revised again, this time to address three themes: 1) Support to Homeless and Vulnerable People, 2) Citizen Engagement, and 3)



Achieving Public Order.<sup>102</sup> Plant envisioned each theme as one factor that affected the next in a cyclical manner. Each theme was to be achieved by three or four different initiatives. Plant refashioned the PCC to focus largely on solving homelessness instead. Public disorder initiatives mentioned in the second progress report focused on bringing “responsible officials together to develop a set of proposals” and creating an initiative which “sees the rewarding of positive, pro-social, civil behaviour.”<sup>103</sup> Policing, ticketing, and fines were not mentioned in the second progress report, and the report did not mention why there was a shift in focus to homelessness. What was clear was that Plant’s project was no longer the PCC Sullivan had initially envisioned. Plant’s appointment also heightened public criticism of the PCC. Many politicians from opposing parties condemned the Action Plan as a poor use of tax dollars because it would not reach any of its goals. Then-councillor Raymond Louie noted, “shouldn’t we be actually putting the resources necessary to the initiatives that are under way currently, [which] have been identified through previous reports and actually enable those programs to have some success?”<sup>104</sup>

#### 2.4.4 Third PCC Progress Report

The last progress report, published on June 24, 2008, was substantially shorter than the previous two reports and provided a summary of what each initiative should achieve.<sup>105</sup> In this sense, they were not really “progress reports” so much as they were public policy statements about what city officials hoped to achieve through various initiatives, most of which were already in place. In short, they were public relations tools to reaffirm Vancouver residents that the Games would enhance their city by addressing public disorder and homelessness issues, especially in the DTES. The title of the report was entirely misleading.

With the second report, the PCC received more criticism and the project began to fall apart. Sullivan admitted there were “problems achieving success on key fronts of ...the Civil City Project.”<sup>106</sup> The PCC’s lack of success affected Sullivan’s chances for re-election. During succeeding Mayor Gregor Robertson’s campaign, Robertson noted, “There needs to be an overall change in the city’s approach to dealing with street disorder” since many tax dollars were being invested into the failing PCC.<sup>107</sup> Robertson promised to cancel the PCC and spend funds on “community policing and ending homelessness” instead.<sup>108</sup> With the instalment of Robertson’s government, the PCC was abandoned in 2009.<sup>109</sup>

## 2.4.5 Significance

The significance of the PCC rests on two points. First, consistent with the literature review, Mayor Sullivan saw the Olympic Games as an opportunity to spend nearly \$2 million dollars on an image building project for the city.<sup>110</sup> The PCC is a good illustration of how public policy is used by government administrators to create Olympic legacies. In this case, the Olympic legacy of the PCC was to reduce public disorder in Vancouver. However, public disorder was a key social problem that had plagued Vancouver for decades. As noted by critics, it was unlikely the PCC’s goals would be reached by 2010. Therefore, the PCC did a better job of gaining support for the Olympic Games than solving public disorder issues.

Second, efforts to regulate public nuisance called for a greater police presence, increased surveillance, and increased enforcement through ticketing and fines. As mentioned in Chapter 1, street sweeps and the criminalization of poverty was common practice for many host cities. The PCC reinforced the fact that government officials often resorted to policing to create the image of a world-class city by clearing the homeless and other marginalized individuals off the street.

Nevertheless, public disorder initiatives focused on increased police presence often brought greater harm to the homeless by invoking fear and encouraging rash decisions in order to avoid arrest.

## 2.5 Assistance to Shelter Act

The first reading of the *Assistance to Shelter Act* (ASA) was introduced by the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia on October 29, 2009.<sup>111</sup> The Bill passed through two additional readings before coming into force by Royal Assent on November 26, 2009. The ASA, also commonly referred to as the “Olympic Kidnapping Act,” gave police the power to “transport the person at risk to an emergency shelter” by use of force when a weather advisory alert was issued.<sup>112</sup> Supplementary to the ASA, the *Assistance to Shelter Regulation* (ASR)<sup>113</sup> outlined how the ASA should be applied, the formal procedures for issuing weather alerts, and when the ASA could be activated. Specifically, the ASA was activated when a community representative or the Minister of Housing and Social Development issued an extreme weather alert due to severely cold or harsh weather conditions as prescribed by the Extreme Weather Response Plan (EWRP).<sup>114</sup> As part of the Extreme Weather Response Program, the EWRP was an initiative conducted and funded by the British Columbia Housing Management Corporation (BC Housing) to “enable communities to temporarily increase emergency shelter capacity during extreme weather conditions that threaten the safety and health of individuals and families who are homeless.”<sup>115</sup> To join this initiative, each community was required to file a EWRP outlining the “geographical area, description of weather conditions that [formed] the basis for an alert in their community and the designated community representative.”<sup>116</sup> Each EWRP for every region under the ASA was accountable to the

requirements of the Extreme Weather Response Policy. For the purposes of this chapter, the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 EWRPs for Vancouver were consulted. The 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 EWRPs defined when the ASA was activated in the lead up to and during the Olympic Games.

Upon issuing an extreme weather alert, all police forces in the applicable region were notified. A police officer assessed whether a homeless person was at risk of harm or in need of assistance. The assessment of risk included considerations about location, age, and risk to suffering physical harm. However, the definition of “risk” and the degree to which an event could be defined as “physical harm”<sup>117</sup> could not be found anywhere in the ASA, implying that “risk of physical harm” was up to the discretion of the police officer. In the event that a person was deemed at risk, the police officer would request permission from the individual to take them into to an emergency shelter. If the individual refused to comply, *Section 7* of the ASA allowed police to use “reasonable force... [to] transport the person at risk to an emergency shelter.”<sup>118</sup> Since the ASA did not define “reasonable force,” critics saw the legislation as a way for police authorities to “clean up” the streets for the Games.<sup>119</sup> That being said, the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 EWRPs provided a stronger definition of what “risk of physical harm” meant. They noted that “an alert will be called when weather conditions are deemed severe enough to present a substantial threat to a life or health of homeless persons.”<sup>120</sup> The EWRPs of other regions in British Columbia shared the exact same definition, yet “risk of physical harm” in the provincial ASA remained undefined.<sup>121</sup> Despite an extensive list of definitions in the ASA, it was unclear why the EWRP, which was not recognized as law by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, defined “risk of physical harm” whereas the ASA did not. As such, determining

physical harm was left to the discretion of each officer, which provided them with a great deal of latitude in terms of how to manage this issue.

The Vancouver 2010-2011 EWRP also gave a clear definition of what “reasonable force” in *Section 7* of the ASA meant. According to the EWRP, the ASA granted “local police and the RCMP the capacity to bring the homeless person to a shelter during extreme weather alerts, against their will if necessary.”<sup>122</sup> As such, the EWRP acknowledged that police could use force to sufficiently coerce an individual into shelter. To be explored in greater depth in Chapter 3, this is an important point because the ASA was criticized as legislation that allowed police to clear the streets of homeless people in preparation for the Games.

At the municipal level, the ASA and the Extreme Weather Response Program was patented through the Winter Response Shelter Strategy. According to the City of Vancouver, the Winter Response Shelter Strategy was created in 2008 when a woman burned to death trying to keep warm by candle flame on a severely cold night.<sup>123</sup> Housing Minister Rich Coleman quoted the same tragic event as the catalyst for the creation of the ASA.<sup>124</sup> However, housing critics remained suspicious of the timing of the ASA since homeless individuals had faced similar deaths for years without notice. According to David Eby, a key voice in the fight against homelessness in Vancouver, “The timing is very suspicious – homeless people have been dying for years. Police could use this to move people out of residential areas, out of tourist areas.”<sup>125</sup> At the municipal level, Vancouver City Council documents also revealed a concern from various politicians regarding “the harmful effects of enforcing the Assistance to Shelter Act in Vancouver” and that “efforts be made to encourage homeless people to seek shelter rather than use coercion.”<sup>126</sup> These comments also revealed the aggressive nature of the ASA on homeless

citizens because the law violated the rights of homeless individuals who choose to remain outside.

On December 9, 2009, the VPD released an administrative report stating, “The creation of a formalized process to issue extreme weather alerts requires the creation of policy to manage the response by the Vancouver Police Department.” The VPD-specific policy, called *Extreme Weather Assistance*, was meant to assist the police in transporting the homeless to shelters and can be found in the VPD’s Regulations and Procedures Manual. In the administrative report, the VPD noted that the ASA allowed police to use “reasonable physical force” to compel a person to emergency shelter. Yet, the VPD insisted that officers would offer “further assistance” in the form of “minimal non-forceful touching equivalent to the supporting hand one would use in helping an elderly person cross the street”<sup>127</sup> and “disengage and release the person” if met with physical resistance.<sup>128</sup>

There appears to be a gap between the VPD’s *Extreme Weather Assistance* policy, the ASA, the regional EWRP, and the opinion of city councillors. Although the VPD claimed to persuade the homeless to shelter by use of “non-forceful touching,” both the EWRP and city councillors expressed an understanding that the homeless would be coerced into shelters or brought against their will if necessary. The VPD’s policy on the ASA was not recognized by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia as law and was self-governing. Therefore, the ASA overruled the VPD’s policy. Additionally, since “extreme weather” was not well-defined in the ASA, police had considerable latitude as to when to coerce the homeless into shelter. Nearly two months prior to the establishment of the ASA, the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association published an article on its homepage regarding four leaked documents from the provincial government.<sup>129</sup> The four documents (two emails and two memos) included an early draft of the

ASA, a list of questions regarding the proposed legislation, and a list of issues associated with the ASA. The early draft was very similar to the ASA in force today. However, in the memo regarding the “proposed process to assist persons to shelter,” the government had initially proposed to “enable the police officer to use force.”<sup>130</sup> The word “reasonable” was absent in the draft, leaving “force” undefined. It is unclear as to why “reasonable” was included in the official draft of the ASA. Yet, regardless of whether “force” was intended to be reasonable or coercive, the provincial government had intentions to move the homeless off the streets by use of force.

Although the use of coercion to prevent deaths in severely cold weather may seem like a good policy decision to act upon, coercing the homeless off the street for commercial reasons is a dubious practice, never mind the fact that coercion of this sort for any reason is a violation of human rights.<sup>131</sup> In reality, the ASA was not so much about protecting the health and safety of homeless individuals in Vancouver, but a tool which, under the premise of health and safety, allowed police to clear the homeless off the streets to promote the image of a prosperous and socially conscious world-class city. The proposed draft also initially allowed jail cells as a form of “alternate accommodation” if emergency shelters were full. According to the draft, “As a last resort, ...the individual may be taken to police cells, either voluntarily or involuntarily, where they will be held until the extreme weather declaration is no longer in effect.”<sup>132</sup> The draft was once again discrepant with the VPD’s policy regarding “minimal non-forceful touching” and disengaging when met with resistance.<sup>133</sup>

There are three points of significance for the ASA. First, similar to other policies, it was created to help build Vancouver’s image of a world-class city by allowing authorities to legally remove “undesirable” people from Vancouver’s streets for the Olympic Games. Second, loopholes in the legislation and the discrepancy between the ASA, the EWRP, and the VPD

meant police officers had a great deal of latitude as to when and how to bring the homeless to shelter because important terms such as “extreme weather,” “risk of physical harm,” and “reasonable force” were ill defined. Third, the ASA allowed police to coerce a homeless individual into shelter even though it was a violation of human rights. Altogether, the ASA shows how politicians, city officials, and the business class often use public policies for their personal benefit, and that this is done in spite of repeated public pronouncements about how those same policies are created and enforced to protect the very same people who are being displaced by those policies.

## 2.6 Conclusion

There are four key take away points from this chapter. First, the exacerbation of homelessness in the lead-up to the Olympic Games was a result of faults in public policy and city administration. As mentioned earlier, Olympic-related evictions were not necessarily caused by Olympic-organizing committees, but through loopholes in public policy. These loopholes, along with the lucrative potential of hosting the Olympic Games, led many landlords and property owners to exploit the SoM, RTA, and SRA to profit from the Games. Second, city officials used their main tools – public policies – to augment Vancouver’s image as a world-class city for the Games. The ASA and PCC are two examples of ordinances that utilized policing strategies to prepare for the Olympics. Despite mega-event research that clearly shows how policing tactics harm marginalized individuals, public disorder and homeless policies continue to emphasize the importance of increased policing in the lead-up to major events. Third, public policy was an important tool used by Olympic boosters to reach their Olympic legacy goals. For instance, Mayor Sullivan envisioned the PCC to be a project that would leave behind a legacy to be



enjoyed by Vancouver citizens for years to come. However, the PCC did not stop homelessness from decreasing in the lead-up to the Games because of loopholes that the city failed to address, as well as poor public oversight of housing policies. In other words, public officials must be pressed into service and held accountable for their claims about social sustainability. The Games themselves do not cause homelessness. Rather, the problem is the failure of public officials to monitor and control the ways in which public policies are created and implemented, ostensibly for the public good. Finally, loopholes in the RTA, ASA, and the PCC reinforced the unequal power relations that exist between the key actors in this drama, such as the landlord and tenant, as well as the police and the homeless. The landlord's power was preserved through the provisions of the RTA because the by-law favoured the party that had the financial resources to appeal a decision and the best access to the legal system. In the case of the ASA and PCC, the ASA gave police the power to coerce the homeless into shelter, while the PCC regulated the behaviour of street people through increased police surveillance and enforcement. The power imbalance between these groups reinforce the fact that marginalized individuals are further disadvantaged in mega-event planning, in spite of public pronouncements claiming the opposite to be true.

## 2.7 Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, "Bylaw No. 5462 Standards of Maintenance By-law," City of Vancouver, 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, "Bylaw No. 5462 Standards of Maintenance By-law," City of Vancouver, s. 3.1.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, s. 4.1.5.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, s. 4.1.12.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, s. 6.1.2.b. and s. 6.1.2.e.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, s. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, s. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, s. 9.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, s. 7.1.2.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, s. 10.1.

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- <sup>13</sup> Office of the Chief Building Official, *Vancouver Building By-law*, Part 10 of Division B: Existing Buildings, s. 10.1.1.2.1.a.
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 10.3.3.1.
- <sup>15</sup> “Raising the Roof: Housing Activism in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside,” Krisztina Kun, Upping the Anti, assessed March 16, 2014, <http://uppingtheanti.org/journal/article/04-raising-the-roof/>.
- <sup>16</sup> Office of the Chief Building Official, *Vancouver Building By-law*, Part 10 of Division B: Existing Buildings, s. 2.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 21.3.a.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 31.3.b.
- <sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 21.3.c.
- <sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 21.20.
- <sup>23</sup> Doug Ward, “37 tenants face eviction at two hotels,” *The Vancouver Sun*, February 17, 2007.
- <sup>24</sup> Canada. British Columbia. Victoria. *Residential Tenancy Act*, SBC 2002, c 78 (Victoria: Queen’s Printer).
- <sup>25</sup> “Case Study: Difficulties with the Residential Tenancy Branch and the Judicial Review Process, Housing Justice, accessed March 16, 2014, <http://housingjustice.ca/case-study-difficulties-with-the-residential-tenancy-branch-and-the-judicial-review-process/>.
- <sup>26</sup> Canada. British Columbia. Victoria. *Residential Tenancy Act*, SBC 2002, c 78 (Victoria: Queen’s Printer).
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 2.1.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 4.a. and s. 4.e.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 12 and s. 13.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 14.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 27.1.a.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 31.1.a. and s. 31.1.b.
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 33.1.b.
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 33.1.c.i –iv.
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 41.1.
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 42.2.
- <sup>37</sup> Residential Tenancy Branch, *Historical Maximum Allowable Rent Increases*, (Vancouver: Office of Housing and Construction Standards).
- <sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>39</sup> Jane Armstrong, “Joining forces in face of ‘renovation,’” *The Globe and Mail*, November 12, 2008.
- <sup>40</sup> Canada. British Columbia. Victoria. *Residential Tenancy Act*, SBC 2002, c 78 (Victoria: Queen’s Printer), s. 43.1.a.
- <sup>41</sup> Residential Tenancy Branch, *Historical Maximum Allowable Rent Increases* (Vancouver: Office of Housing and Construction Standards), 1.
- <sup>42</sup> Carnegie Community Action Plan, *Disappearing Homes: The loss of affordable housing in the DTES* (Vancouver: Carnegie Community Action Plan, April 2008), 7.
- <sup>43</sup> Residential Tenancy Branch, *Historical Maximum Allowable Rent Increases* (Vancouver: Office of Housing and Construction Standards), 1.
- <sup>44</sup> Canada. British Columbia. Victoria. *Residential Tenancy Act*, SBC 2002, c 78 (Victoria: Queen’s Printer), s. 56.1.1.a.i.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 49.2.a and s. 49.2.b.
- <sup>46</sup> Jane Armstrong, “Joining forces in face of ‘renovation,’” *The Globe and Mail*, November 12, 2008.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>48</sup> “Case Study: Difficulties with the Residential Tenancy Branch and the Judicial Review Process,” Housing Justice Canada, accessed March 25, 2014, <http://housingjustice.ca/case-study-difficulties-with-the-residential-tenancy-branch-and-the-judicial-review-process/>.
- <sup>49</sup> “B.C. Tenants Face Inadequate Appeal Process,” Jess Hadley and Kendra Milne, Huffington Post British Columbia, accessed March 25, 2014, [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/jess-hadley/bc-tenants-landlords-rental-appeal\\_b\\_2546375.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/jess-hadley/bc-tenants-landlords-rental-appeal_b_2546375.html).
- <sup>50</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, “By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law,” (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 7.1.

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<sup>51</sup> “General Information on Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law: Question and Answer,” City of Vancouver, accessed March 6, 2014, <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/single-room-accommodation-bylaw-fact-sheet.pdf>.

<sup>52</sup> “General Information on Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law: Question and Answer,” City of Vancouver, accessed March 6, 2014, <https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/single-room-accommodation-bylaw-fact-sheet.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>54</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *Policy Report Development and Building: Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law Status Report* (Vancouver, November 30, 2006), 9.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *Policy Report Development and Building: Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law Status Report* (Vancouver, November 30, 2006), 4.

<sup>57</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 1.2.a-g.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 1.2.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 2.2.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 2.3.

<sup>61</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 4.1.a.d., and s. 4.2.

<sup>62</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 9028 A By-law to amend Single Room Accommodation By-law No. 8733 regarding miscellaneous amendments* (Vancouver, April 26, 2005), s. 4.3.i., and s. 4.3.ii. Consolidated version: Council, *By-Law No. 8733* (Vancouver, January 29, 2013), s. 4.3.e.i., and s. 4.3.e.ii.

<sup>63</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 9479 A By-law to amend Single Room Accommodation By-law No. 8733 regarding miscellaneous amendments* (Vancouver, May 15, 2007), s. 5. Consolidated version: Council, *By-Law No. 8733* (Vancouver, January 29, 2013), s. 4.4A.

<sup>64</sup> Council, *By-law No. 9479*, s. 6. Consolidated version: Council, *By-Law No. 8733* (Vancouver, January 29, 2013), s. 4.5.

<sup>65</sup> Council, *By-law No. 9479*, s. 7.a. Consolidated version: Council, *By-Law No. 8733* (Vancouver, January 29, 2013), s. 4.6.a.

<sup>66</sup> Carnegie Community Action Plan, *Still Losing Hotel Rooms: CCAP’s 2009 Hotel Survey and Report* (Vancouver: Carnegie Community Action Plan, June 2009), 13.

<sup>67</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 4.6.b. Council of the City of Vancouver, *Policy Report Development and Building: Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law Status Report* (Vancouver, November 30, 2006), 1.

<sup>68</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 4.6.c.

<sup>69</sup> The term “instrument” is not defined in SRA. Therefore, it will be assumed that Council will provide the guidelines of what “instrument” constitutes on a case-to-case basis. According to the 2006 Status Report, “Each proposed project involving the conversion or demolition of single room accommodation has been dealt with on a case-by-case basis to respect the particular circumstances of the application.” Council of the City of Vancouver, *Policy Report Development and Building: Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law Status Report* (Vancouver, November 30, 2006), 6.

<sup>70</sup> Transient Guest is defined as “a tourist, hosteller, or other individual who, in return for rent, occupies a room on a transient basis for business or pleasure, and not as his or her residence, and does so for at fewer than 30 days.” Council, *By-law No. 9479*, s. 2.b. Consolidated version: Council, *By-Law No. 8733* (Vancouver, January 29, 2013), s. 1.2.

<sup>71</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 4.6.e.i.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, s. 4.6.e.ii., and s. 4.6.e.iii.

<sup>73</sup> Council, *By-law No. 9975*, s. 9. Consolidated version: Council, *By-Law No. 8733* (Vancouver, January 29, 2013), s. 4.12.

<sup>74</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 4.6.f.

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid, s. 4.6.g.

<sup>76</sup> Council, *By-law No. 9479*, s. 7.c. Consolidated version: Council, *By-Law No. 8733* (Vancouver, January 29, 2013), s. 4.6.h.

<sup>77</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 4.8.

<sup>78</sup> Council of the City of Vancouver, *By-law No. 8733 Single Room Accommodation By-law* (Vancouver, October 21, 2003), s. 4.9., and s. 4.10.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, s. 6.1.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, s. 6.2.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, s. 6.6.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid, s. 6.7.

<sup>83</sup> City of Vancouver, *Project Civil City* (Vancouver: Office of the Mayor, 2006), 3.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> City of Vancouver, *Project Civil City* (Vancouver: Office of the Mayor, 2006), 4.

<sup>86</sup> “Civil City project, Plant grilled” *The Vancouver Province*, accessed March 25, 2007, <http://www.canada.com/theprovince/news/story.html?id=4e49bd3f-2c0c-473f-9cff-058fcb4d4364>.

<sup>87</sup> “16 Vancouver Elected Representatives Speak Out on Sullivan’s Project Civil City,” Libby Davies, Member of Parliament for Vancouver East, accessed March 12, 2014, <http://www.libbydavies.ca/news/pressrelease/2007/3/15/16-vancouver-elected-representatives-speak-out-sullivans-project-civil#.UyC9PfldWSo>.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> City of Vancouver, *Project Civil City* (Vancouver: Office of the Mayor, 2006), 7.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>93</sup> City of Vancouver, *Project Civil City* (Vancouver: Office of the Mayor, 2006), 15.

<sup>94</sup> City of Vancouver, *Administrative Report: Project Civil City – Progress Update* (Vancouver, March 27, 2007).

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>96</sup> “Civil City project, Plant grilled” *The Vancouver Province*, accessed March 25, 2007, <http://www.canada.com/theprovince/news/story.html?id=4e49bd3f-2c0c-473f-9cff-058fcb4d4364>.

<sup>97</sup> City of Vancouver, *Administrative Report: Project Civil City – Progress Update* (Vancouver, March 27, 2007), 7.

<sup>98</sup> For the reference regarding *Single Resident Accommodation By-law*: City of Vancouver, *Administrative Report: Project Civil City – Progress Update. Project Civil City Action Plan –Sorted by ID (Master List - All Fields)*. (Vancouver, March 26, 2007), 14:1. For the reference regarding *Standards of Maintenance By-Law*: City of Vancouver, *Administrative Report: Project Civil City – Progress Update. Project Civil City Action Plan –Sorted by ID (Master List - All Fields)* (Vancouver, March 26, 2007), 20: 22.

<sup>99</sup> Will Small, Andrea Krusi, Evan Wood, Julio Montaner, and Thomas Kerr, “Street-level policing in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, Canada, during the 2010 Winter Olympics,” *International Journal of Drug Policy* 23, (2012): 128.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> City of Vancouver, *Administrative Report: Project Civil City – Progress Report* (Vancouver, October 30, 2007), 2.

<sup>102</sup> City of Vancouver, *Administrative Report: Project Civil City – Progress Report* (Vancouver, October 30, 2007), 16.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 22.

<sup>104</sup> “Civil City project, Plant grilled” *The Vancouver Province*, accessed March 25, 2007, <http://www.canada.com/theprovince/news/story.html?id=4e49bd3f-2c0c-473f-9cff-058fcb4d4364>.

<sup>105</sup> City of Vancouver, *Administrative Report: Project Civil City – Progress Report* (Vancouver, June 24, 2008).

<sup>106</sup> “Bad Numbers for ‘Civil City,’ Monte Paulsen, The Tyee, accessed March 13, 2014, <http://thetyee.ca/News/2008/01/24/CivilCity/>.

<sup>107</sup> “Project Civil City at death’s door,” *Vancouver Courier*, accessed March 13, 2014, <http://www.canada.com/vancouvercourier/news/story.html?id=9cfe280e-9d88-4688-8e2b-32dcff1feb80>.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

- <sup>109</sup> Philip Boyle and Kevin D. Haggerty, “Civil Cities and Urban Governance: Regulating Disorder for the Vancouver Winter Olympics,” *Urban Studies* 48, no.15 (2011): 3187.
- <sup>110</sup> Monte Paulsen, “May Sullivan’s Big Ambitions,” *TheTyee.ca*, December 21, 2006.
- <sup>111</sup> “1<sup>st</sup> Reading Bill – BC Assistance to Shelter Act,” BC Legislation Portal, accessed February 28, 2014, <http://www.bclaws.ca/2009http://www.bclaws.ca/2009/10/28/1st-reading-bill-bc-assistance-to-shelter-act/10/28/1st-reading-bill-bc-assistance-to-shelter-act/>. Much of the evidence for why homelessness was exacerbated will be explored in the following chapter regarding the critic’s response to the legislations.
- <sup>112</sup> Bill 18, *Assistance to Shelter Act*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2009 (assented to 26 November 2009), s. 7.
- <sup>113</sup> *Assistance to Shelter Regulation*, B.C. Reg. 291/2009, [http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/291\\_2009](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/291_2009).
- <sup>114</sup> *Assistance to Shelter Regulation*, B.C. Reg. 291/2009, [http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/291\\_2009](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/291_2009).
- <sup>115</sup> “Assistance to Shelter Act”, BC Housing, accessed February 28, 2014, <http://www.bchousing.org/Partners/Operating/EWR/ASA>.
- <sup>116</sup> “Assistance to Shelter Act”, BC Housing, accessed February 28, 2014, <http://www.bchousing.org/Partners/Operating/EWR/ASA>.
- <sup>117</sup> Bill 18, *Assistance to Shelter Act*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2009 (assented to 26 November 2009), s. 5.c.
- <sup>118</sup> Bill 18, *Assistance to Shelter Act*, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, 39<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 2009 (assented to 26 November 2009), s. 7.
- <sup>119</sup> “BCCLA Uncovers Plan to Turn Homeless Shelters in Jails,” Tom Sandborn, British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, accessed March 6, 2014, <http://bccla.org/news/2009/09/bccla-uncovers-plan-to-turn-homeless-shelters-into-jails/>.
- <sup>120</sup> Both the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 versions of Vancouver’s EWRP had this definition. Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy, *Vancouver Extreme Weather Response Plan 2009-2010* (Vancouver: Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy, 2010), 3. <http://www.gvss.ca/PDF-2010/Vancouver%202009-2010%20EWR%20Plan.pdf>. Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy, *Vancouver Extreme Weather Response Plan 2010/2011* (Vancouver: Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy, 2010), 4. <http://www.gvss.ca/PDF-2011/Vancouver%20EWR%202010%20-%20online.pdf>.
- <sup>121</sup> Specifically, I consulted Burnaby’s EWRP, New Westminister’s EWRP, and Victoria/Saanich’s Extreme Weather Protocol.
- <sup>122</sup> Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy, *Vancouver Extreme Weather Response Plan 2010/2011* (Vancouver: Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy, 2010), 4.
- <sup>123</sup> “Background: Dawn Bergman’s legacy,” Winter Response Shelter Strategy, City of Vancouver, accessed February 28, 2014, <https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/winter-response-shelter-strategy.aspx>.
- <sup>124</sup> Lori Culbert, “Tracy’s Legacy,” *The Vancouver Sun*, January 9, 2010, A.9.
- <sup>125</sup> Ian Austin, “Homeless to be forced to shelters; ‘Vague’ bill’s timing too suspicious for critic,” *The Vancouver Province*, October 30, 2009.
- <sup>126</sup> City of Vancouver, *Report to Council: Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment*: “5. Assistance to Shelter Act,” December 3, 2009.
- <sup>127</sup> Jim Chu, *Vancouver Police Department: Planning, Research & Audit Section: Administrative Report. Addition to Regulations and Procedures Manual Section 1.17 Extreme Weather Assistance* (Vancouver, 2009), 2.
- <sup>128</sup> Jim Chu, *Vancouver Police Department: Planning, Research & Audit Section: Administrative Report. Addition to Regulations and Procedures Manual Section 1.17 Extreme Weather Assistance* (Vancouver, 2009), 3.
- <sup>129</sup> “BCCLA Uncovers Plan to Turn Homeless Shelters in Jails,” Tom Sandborn, British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, accessed March 6, 2014, <http://bccla.org/news/2009/09/bccla-uncovers-plan-to-turn-homeless-shelters-into-jails/>. Memos are attached and accessible through: “BCCLA Uncovers Plan to Turn Homeless Shelters in Jails,” Tom Sandborn, British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, accessed March 6, 2014, <http://bccla.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/2009-BC-Housing-Memo-Assistance-to-Shelter.pdf>.
- <sup>130</sup> “Proposed process to assist persons to shelter,” (N.p: n.p, n.d.), n.p, <http://bccla.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/2009-BC-Housing-Memo-Assistance-to-Shelter.pdf>.
- <sup>131</sup> “COHRE Statement on Mega-Events,” COHRE, Centre on Housing Rights & Evictions, accessed, March 11, 2014, <http://www.cohre.org/news/press-releases/cohre-statement-on-mega-events>.
- <sup>132</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>133</sup> Ibid.



## Chapter 3

### 3 Critics, Public Policy, and the 2010 Olympics

In the lead-up to the Olympic Games, prominent housing critics and Olympic watchdog groups recognized that poorly enforced policy and legislation were the greatest factors that exacerbated homelessness in Vancouver. This chapter examines the various publications released by the Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition (IOCC), the Carnegie Community Action Plan (CCAP), and the PIVOT Legal Society (PIVOT). The IOCC, CCAP, and PIVOT were the three most critical organizations to address the issue of homelessness in Vancouver in conjunction to the Olympic Games. Although these groups were formed at different times and advocated different issues, all three groups were concerned about how public policy, linked to the Games, aggravated homelessness in the Downtown East Side (DTES).

Using various publications released by the IOCC, CCAP, and PIVOT, this chapter will analyze: 1) the roles and priorities of each group regarding housing and homelessness issues in Vancouver, 2) what each group thought about the impacts of the 2010 Olympics on housing and homelessness issues on the DTES, and 3) the perspective each group took regarding public policy and homelessness issues in order to address Olympic-related displacement. By analyzing these themes, this chapter will: 1) show that there are many challenges associated with establishing parameters for change in housing and homelessness policies within and amongst different advocacy groups, 2) illustrate how housing policies have little to no power to protect low-income tenants from Olympic-related displacement if public officials do not enforce the housing by-laws, and 3) display how homelessness policies, put in place for city beautification

purposes, often have negative implications on the homeless by selectively targeting and limiting them through police tactics.

### 3.1 The Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition (IOCC)

Comprised primarily of various community activists and academics, the IOCC was created in 2002 when Vancouver submitted the first draft of the Olympic bid book for review.<sup>1</sup> The primary goal of the IOCC was to “mitigate the negative impacts of the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games and to advocate for a rich post-Games, community-based legacy.”<sup>2</sup> Known as the main watchdog group for the Vancouver Games,<sup>3</sup> the IOCC’s main role was to keep VANOC accountable to its promises of social sustainability and positive impacts. Throughout its lifespan (2002 – 2010), the IOCC ran public forums in collaboration with the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), civic officials, and local citizens to discuss how social issues, such as homelessness and civil liberty violations, might increase in an effort to address them ahead of time. The IOCC also worked to establish benefits for inner-city citizens in the lead-up to the Games.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the IOCC’s push for adherence to social sustainability issues and community benefits led all levels of government to create the 2010 Inclusive Winter Games Commitment Statement (ICI) in 2002. Some of the commitments in the ICI included promises to “protect rental housing stock,” “ensure people are not made homeless as a result of the Winter Games,” “ensure residents are not involuntarily displaced, evicted or face unreasonable increases in rent due to the Winter Games,” and “provide an affordable housing legacy.”<sup>4</sup> The ICI was deemed pivotal in gaining Vancouver the reputation as the most socially sustainable Games in Olympic history.<sup>5</sup> IOCC organizers declared, “This is the first Games in history that is poised to



evolve community-based issues and concerns into legacies.”<sup>6</sup> Table 2 illustrates the commitments of the ICI. The points of interest for this chapter are bolded. Important to note, although the IOCC was known as the main Olympic watchdog group, the politics and constituents of the group changed over time, moving away from homelessness to addressing civil liberty issues instead.<sup>7</sup> The documents analyzed in this chapter reflect that change. More about this change will be covered later in the chapter.

<b>2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement</b>
<b>Accessible Games</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop barrier free venues for people with disabilities.</li> <li>• Ensure reasonable accessibility for people with disabilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Affordable Games Events</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make affordable tickets available for Vancouver’s low-income inner-city residents, including at risk youth and children.</li> </ul>
<b>Affordable Recreation and Community Sport</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize inner-city residents’ access to the new and public upgraded facilities after the Winter Games.</li> <li>• Ensure inner-city community centres have equitable access to surplus sporting equipment.</li> <li>• Maximize access by inner-city residents, at-risk youth and children to sport and recreational initiatives by building from the current sport delivery infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Business Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop opportunities for existing and emerging local inner-city businesses and artisans to promote their goods and services.</li> <li>• Develop potential procurement opportunities for businesses that employ local residents.</li> </ul>
<b>Civil Liberties and Public Safety</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for lawful, democratic protest that is protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.</li> <li>• <b>Ensure all inner-city residents’ continued access to public spaces before, during and after the Games and provide adequate notice of any restrictions of the use of public space/facilities and prominently display alternate routes and facilities.</b></li> <li>• Maintain the current level of public safety in inner-city neighbourhoods during the Winter Games.</li> <li>• Commit to a timely public consultation that is accessible to inner-city neighbourhoods, before any security legislation or regulations are finalized, subject to lawful and legitimate confidentiality requirements.</li> <li>• Ensure RCMP is the lead agency for security.</li> <li>• Reflect the aesthetic design standards of Vancouver in all security related measures.</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural Activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showcase the diverse cultural, multicultural and aboriginal activities of inner-city residents.</li> </ul>
<b>Employment and Training</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create training and a continuum of short and long-term employment opportunities for inner-city residents to encourage a net increase in employment.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide reasonable wages and decent working conditions for any local working producing Games related goods and services before and during the Winter Games.</li> </ul>
<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure environmental “best practices” in inner-city neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
<p>Financial Guarantees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide adequate funds to maintain and operate the new or upgraded public recreational facilities after the Games to maximize the number of facilities available to inner-city residents.</li> <li>• Provide adequate programming funds for the new or upgraded public recreational facilities to encourage a maintenance or increase in recreation programs.</li> <li>• Provide disclosure of all financial aspects of the Games, including expenditures and revenues, in the bidding and organizing phase of the Games.</li> <li>• Commit to a comprehensive annual financial audit.</li> </ul>
<p>Health and Social Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain delivery of health and social services to inner-city residents during the Winter Games.</li> <li>• Showcase a commitment to public health issues, including a comprehensive alcohol and drug strategy.</li> </ul>
<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Protect rental housing stock.</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide as many alternative forms of temporary accommodation for Winter Games visitors and workers.</b></li> <li>• <b>Ensure people are not made homeless as a result of the Winter Games.</b></li> <li>• <b>Ensure residents are not involuntarily displaced, evicted or face unreasonable increases in rent due to the Winter Games.</b></li> <li>• <b>Provide an affordable housing legacy and start planning now.</b></li> </ul>
<p>Input to Decision-Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide inclusive representation on the Bid Corporation’s and Organizing Committee’s Board structures and all relevant Bid Corporation and Organizing Committee’s work groups.</li> <li>• Ensure inner-city inclusive work continues to operate under the Organizing Committee and its Member Partners.</li> <li>• Work with and be accessible to an independent watchdog group that includes inner-city residents.</li> <li>• Document opportunities and impacts experienced in inner-city neighbourhoods in a comprehensive post-Games evaluation with full participation by inner-city residents.</li> </ul>
<p>Neighbourliness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stage events that respect adjacent neighbours.</li> </ul>
<p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all Vancouver Games events and venues can be reached by public transit at an affordable cost.</li> <li>• Minimize any potential adverse transportation impacts on inner-city residents.</li> </ul>

**Table 2: This table documents the – commitments made by VANOC and government partners to ensure the most socially sustainable Games. These commitments were written into a document called the Inner City Inclusive Commitment Statement.<sup>8</sup>**

To follow up on the ICI, the IOCC published various documents that analyzed VANOC’s progress with the aim of assisting VANOC in achieving its ICI commitments. This section will analyze four documents released by the IOCC, some of which were written with the IOCC’s

participation. In May 2007, the IOCC, along with various housing advocacy groups, members of the private sector, and government representatives released a report called the “Report of the Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table.” The report outlined twenty-four recommendations regarding housing issues in the DTES that VANOC needed to address. The report presented the IOCC as a committed partner in bringing about housing change. Soon after the release of the Housing Table report, the IOCC published three Olympic Oversight Interim Report Cards (2007, 2009, 2010) to evaluate whether VANOC and government partners were keeping their promises to social and environmental sustainability, civil liberty issues, and budgeting.<sup>9</sup> The purpose of the report cards was to “identify, both retrospectively and prospectively, which Commitments to date have not been substantially met by the parties and which – if current policies prevail – are in danger of not being met by the Parties, in the hopes of encouraging greater and more concerted efforts to meet the Commitments and to ensure this Olympics has a lasting, positive impact for all British Columbians.”<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to the IOCC’s commitment to housing issues, the report cards did not address policy, housing, or homelessness and, instead, covered mostly civil liberty issues, specifically the maltreatment of protesters. This was because many IOCC members were involved with Olympic protests. The IOCC and other activist groups experienced greater levels of resistance from the VPD when protesting the coming of the Games, prompting a greater focus on civil liberty issues in the latter part of the IOCC’s history. Despite the fact that housing issues were an important component of the ICI, the report cards only covered one or two instances of housing and homelessness violations.

It is unclear whether the report cards are reliable. They provide no clear rationale for what was considered a poor or satisfactory grade, and there are no baseline measures to show

what VANOC was supposed to achieve. Explanations provided in the second and third report card are not cited, making the source and reliability of data unclear. Furthermore, most of the ICI commitments are not even evaluated in the first and second report card. The only consistent theme throughout the three report cards is the IOCC's evaluation of civil liberty and public transparency issues. In all, the three report cards are poorly organized with little to no flow between them. It is unclear which issues were resolved and which issues were exacerbated, making their effectiveness questionable at best.

Still, the Housing Table report and the three report cards are important sources because they reveal the IOCC's change in advocacy as the years progressed. Although the Housing Table report shows that the IOCC was initially committed to analyzing and assisting VANOC with its ICI housing commitments, the IOCC's emphasis on housing priorities declined with each subsequent report card. Due to the changing nature of the report, the IOCC's analysis of each housing and homelessness policy was likely not permanently held or shared by the group throughout its lifespan.

### 3.1.1 Report of the Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table

In 2007, the IOCC, along with various social advocacy groups, private corporations, and representatives from the Government of Canada, the Government of British Columbia, and the City of Vancouver created the Housing Table. This multi-sector group was committed to helping Vancouver reach its ICI housing commitments. In March 2007, the Housing Table published the "Report of the Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table," which stated the aim of the group was to "develop goals, action plans, and outcomes that will create lasting housing benefits associated with the 2010 Games, in the pursuit of the overarching goal of eradicating homelessness."<sup>11</sup>

Written for VANOC and government partners, the report contained twenty-four recommendations to help facilitate the achievement of the five housing commitments listed in the ICI. Table 3 lists the five housing commitments and the recommended actions. The bolded points are of interest to this chapter. Although the City did not implement most of the recommendations, the report revealed that the IOCC was initially committed to resolving housing issues and that housing issues was a far-reaching issue that required investment from both public and private sectors.

<b>Commitment Statement</b>	<b>Recommended Action</b>
<b>Provide an Affordable Housing Legacy</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build social housing</li> <li>2. Build social housing in the Olympic Village</li> </ol>
<b>Protect Rental Housing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Purchase or lease existing rental housing</li> <li>4. Develop and implement communications strategy with VANOC and housing ministries</li> <li><b>5. Re-examine SRA policies</b></li> <li>6. Encourage municipal action to protect rental housing</li> <li><b>7. Introduce interim anti-demolition/conversion measures and penalties for vacant buildings</b></li> <li><b>8. Provide proactive enforcement</b></li> <li>9. Encourage municipal maintenance by-laws</li> <li>10. Use property tax incentives to maintain affordable rents for renters</li> <li>11. Provide funds for education to improve low-income renting</li> <li>12. Reform federal tax system to offset low-income rental expenses</li> <li>13. Expand and change RRAP</li> </ol>
<b>Provide Alternative Forms of Temporary Accommodation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Establish a Short-stay Registry for Olympic visitors</li> <li>15. Create short-stay youth facilities</li> <li>16. Build worker housing</li> </ol>
<b>Ensure Homelessness Does Not Increase as a Result of the Winter Games</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. Eliminate barriers to access income assistance</li> <li>18. Increase income assistance</li> <li>19. Increase funding for specific groups</li> <li>20. Increase funding for addiction and mental health services</li> <li>21. Improve local planning and delivery of services</li> </ol>
<b>Ensure Residents are not Involuntarily Displaced,</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. Increase assistance for tenants</li> </ol>

Evicted or Subject to Unreasonable Rent Increases as a Result of the Games	23. Increase Advising Assistance for tenants 24. Change the RTA
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**Table 3: This table shows the recommendations of the Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table to protect and create sustainable housing in the lead up to the Games.<sup>12</sup>**

The Housing Table identified the construction, protection, and funding of new social housing units as the most effective way to eradicate homelessness.<sup>13</sup> Regarding housing policy, the Housing Table took a proactive stance by recommending amendments to existing policies rather than simply identifying the problems. However, the Housing Table noted that measures such as the *Single Room Accommodation By-law* (SRA), *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA), and *Standards of Maintenance By-law* (SoM), which regulated the demolition of single-room occupancy hotels (SROs), needed to be reassessed and amended. The Housing Table saw the enforcement of the by-laws as an “ongoing challenge” that allowed landlords to neglect their responsibilities and made homelessness worse in the lead up to the Games.<sup>14</sup> There was also concern that short-stay workers who were unable to afford conventional hotel accommodations or who could not find housing would compete for low-income accommodations and displace the tenants.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.1.2 Olympic Oversight Interim Report Card #1

Then, in May 2007, the IOCC released its first interim report card. The IOCC assigned VANOC and government partners an overall grade of D-.<sup>16</sup> Initially, the IOCC had assigned VANOC and partners an F grade. However, the watchdog group recognized there was still time for VANOC to attain the ICI’s promised goals and assigned VANOC a grade of D- instead: a marginal improvement but still failing grade. Of the three reports, the IOCC’s first report card provided the most detailed assessment of VANOC’s progression and was the only report card to reference its supporting arguments. However, only four of the twelve commitments addressed in

the ICI were actually assessed. The report card assessed issues relating to “housing and displacement,” “environmental commitments,” “civil liberty commitments,” and “public expenditure and transparency.”<sup>17</sup> Table 4 shows the breakdown of the first report card. This section will only discuss the IOCC’s analysis of housing and homeless issues. Out of the entire report, the IOCC devoted the most coverage to civil liberty issues, spanning ten pages out of the thirty page report including appendices. In contrast, its housing assessment spanned only three pages.

<b>Housing and Displacement</b>	<b>Environmental Commitments</b>	<b>Civil Liberty Commitments</b>	<b>Public Expenditure and Transparency</b>
Olympic-related erosion of low-income rental housing and the lack of government response	Insufficient resources to meet sustainability commitments	Implicit/Explicit encouragement of civil injunctions and criminal contempt of court charges	True cost accounting at the municipal level
	Preferring less sustainable modes of transportation at significant environmental cost	Illegal restrictions on public space and the mobility and assembly rights of protesters in general at Games-related events	True cost accounting at the provincial level
	Environmental legacy projects that risk degradation of the environment	Attempted exclusion of bid partner critics from participation in Olympic dialogues	Public entity sponsorship by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia
		Use of criminal law to intimidate Games critics	A lack of transparency at VANOC
		Lack of protection for criticism, satire, and independent media freedom of speech	
		Proposed legislation and policies restricting inner city residents’ and homeless residents’ use of public space, before, during, and after the Games	
<b>Total Pages: 3</b>	<b>Total Pages: 3</b>	<b>Total Pages: 10</b>	<b>Total Pages: 3</b>

**Table 4: Breakdown of themes covered in the Olympic Interim Report Card # 1**<sup>18</sup>

On housing issues, the IOCC stated, “Vancouver is following historical patterns of Games-related evictions”<sup>19</sup> in that “specific Olympic-related projects initiated by the municipal

government are putting increasing pressure on the low-income rental stock in the inner-city.”<sup>20</sup>

Although Olympic developments were leading people to live on the streets, the IOCC claimed that the City was “reluctant to enforce by-laws and order repairs, resulting in closures.”<sup>21</sup> The IOCC also noted that the City was failing to meet the demand for housing caused by SRO closures. Contrary to what was promised in the ICI, the IOCC stated there was “minimal construction of social housing” in the DTES. It was speculated that very few Olympic social housing units would be available to low-income and marginalized populations following the Olympic Games. The review was followed by recommendations for VANOC to dedicate funding to replace derelict low-income housing.<sup>22</sup>

The IOCC was also concerned about the restriction of public space for homeless citizens in the DTES as a means for city beautification.<sup>23</sup> The IOCC expressed concern that the City would use various policing tactics, including the *Project Civil City* (PCC), to “restrict inner-city residents’ and homeless residents’ use of public space, before, during, and after the Games.”<sup>24</sup> These tactics were criticized as tools to prevent ‘undesirable’ representations of the city from being seen in public. There was also concern that the VPD would harass the homeless through ticketing and fines, leading the IOCC to believe that homelessness were being criminalized in an effort to promote a sanitized image of the city to the world.<sup>25</sup> Overall, the IOCC thought that homelessness was negatively impacted by the Olympic Games in two ways. First, Vancouver’s housing policies were thought to exacerbate homelessness because the City did not enforce them; thus, the policies did little to protect tenants from being displaced. Second, the IOCC showed that housing policies, such as the PCC, were harmful to the homeless because they selectively targeted them through public space restrictions and ticketing.



### 3.1.3 Olympic Oversight Interim Report Card #2

Two years later, in April 2009, the IOCC published its second report card. According to the IOCC, there appeared to be “an over-emphasis on public relations and marketing related to a ‘socially inclusive’ 2010 Games, rather than a substantive effort to address the real concerns of civil society organizations.”<sup>26</sup> This theme is echoed in the third report card, suggesting that VANOC had marketed its vision for success while neglecting its social commitments to Vancouver’s inner-city community as promised in the ICI. The IOCC claimed that many of VANOC’s promises were still unmet since the release of the first report card. In response, the second report card highlighted how VANOC had moved substantially away from its ICI commitments. Indeed, VANOC announced that more than half of the commitments were not going to be implemented in time for the Games.<sup>27</sup> Contrary to their promise to evaluate all commitments listed in the ICI, the IOCC addressed only two in its second report card (“Civil Liberty and Public Safety” and “Input to Decision-Making & Transparency”). Table 5 displays a thematic breakdown of issues and recommendations covered the second report card and shows that the IOCC focused on civil liberty and public consultation issues in the lead up to the Games. As displayed by PIVOT and CCAP’s housing data, low-income tenants experienced Olympic-related displacement and rent increases leading to homelessness. Therefore, the IOCC should have prioritized housing issues in its second report card.

<b>Civil Liberty and Public Safety</b>	<b>Input to Decision-Making &amp; Transparency</b>
Olympic Impact on the homeless: Lack of transparency on initiatives to resolve homelessness	VANOC meeting minutes cancelled to prevent public access through FOI requests
VPD: Criminalizing homelessness: “Street sweeps” and ticketing	Sponsorship considerations appearing to influence policy and security decisions
Security Reports and the Criminalization of Dissent	Athlete’s Village Fiasco
Placing Limits on Freedom of Expression	Insufficient Inner-City Consultations

Security Cameras: Breach of citizen’s rights to privacy	Lack of consultation or Discussion over By-law Changes and Access to Transportation During the Olympics
	Curbing Freedom of Expression

**Table 5: Breakdown of issues and recommendations covered Olympic Interim Report Card # 2<sup>28</sup>**

In the report’s section on civil liberties, the IOCC discussed issues regarding Olympic-related evictions,<sup>29</sup> the restrictions on homeless people in public spaces, increased ticketing, the intimidation of critics, and violations to protesters’ freedom of expression.<sup>30</sup> The IOCC stated, “There has been very little thought put in to dealing with the impacts on the inner-city, and particularly on tenants in the city.”<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, tenants would continue to be illegally evicted if VANOC and government partners did not fix the policy loopholes, especially in the RTA, and compensate tenants who were illegally evicted as a result of Olympic-related development.<sup>32</sup> The IOCC also expressed concern about the potential for the VPD to criminalize and harass the homeless by increasing the frequency of ticketing poverty-related offenses in the DTES.<sup>33</sup> Although ticketing was often seen as a practice to deter public disorder and related behaviours, homeless people who could not afford rent would not be able to pay the VPD fines. As a result, ticketing was a method used to control the presence and behaviours of certain types of people on the street. The IOCC assigned VANOC and government partners another D- in the second report for failing to meet its stated commitments.

### 3.1.4 Olympic Oversight Interim Report Card #3

On February 25, 2010, the IOCC published its third and final Olympic report card. VANOC and government partners were once again assigned a failing grade of D-. Similar to the second report card, the IOCC noted that VANOC and government partners “followed a pattern of distorted documentation that looked at the benefits of the 2010 Olympics Games while not

adequately acknowledging the impacts.”<sup>34</sup> The IOCC was referring to the massive cost overruns that were not reported in VANOC’s financial documents and the fact that there was a lack of transparency between VANOC and the public regarding those costs. The IOCC’s reports suggest that VANOC never intended to address ICI commitments from the start. Furthermore, there is a reoccurring theme of how negative images are hidden from public view in preparation for the Olympic Games. In VANOC’s case, Olympic project costs were not honestly relayed to the public, leading the public to believe that the Games were helping the city more than they actually were.

Unlike the first and second reports, the third report card assessed all of the issues listed in the ICI and assigned grades to each area of concern, although this should have been done in all report cards. As noted in Section 3.1, the IOCC did not explain how each grade was assigned, so it was unclear what the grades were actually assessing. Furthermore, it was unclear how the IOCC came to these conclusions since there was no discussion of most of the issues in the previous two reports. The highest grade assigned in the third report card was C+ for making the Games accessible for visitors with disabilities. The lowest grade assigned was F-, for the restrictions on critics’ freedom of speech, finances, accessibility of health and social services to inner-city residents, housing, and public consultation. Table 6 illustrates the mark break-down for the third report card.

C+	C-	D-	F-
Accessibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Games were not accessible for people with disabilities.</li> </ul>	Affordability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General public and inner-city citizens found attending the Games expensive.</li> </ul>	Affordable Recreation and Community Sport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No plans for public use of facilities.</li> </ul>	Cultural Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening Ceremonies did not reflect multicultural community.</li> </ul>
	Business Development	Business Development	Financial Guarantees

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some DTES businesses were negatively impacted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locals should have been hired for construction work.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>VANOC spent much more on the Games than promised.</li> </ul>
		<b>Civil Liberties</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Civil liberties were violated due to restrictions on protesters' access to public space, restrictive sign by-laws, protesters' signage removal, increased surveillance, and police infiltration of activist organizations.</li> </ul>	<b>Health, Social Services/Housing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homelessness has doubled and there was a huge loss of housing stock in the DTES.</li> </ul>
		<b>Environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental effects of the Games were negative. No detail provided.</li> </ul>	<b>Input to Decision-Making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was very little involvement of the inner-city community in the planning process.</li> </ul>
		<b>Neighbourliness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultations with related organizations were not completed well.</li> </ul>	
		<b>Transportation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transportation could have contributed to sustainability. No detail provided.</li> </ul>	
<b>OVERALL GRADE: D-</b>			

**Table 6: This table displays the IOCC's mark breakdown of how well VANOC and government partners achieved ICI commitments.<sup>35</sup>**

Unlike the first and second report card, there was no mention of public space restrictions for inner-city residents in the third report. Much of the discussion surrounding civil liberties documented the ways protesters and critics were limited in expression and protest. In its assessment of housing issues, the IOCC gave VANOC and government partners an F- for the

City's mismanagement of housing units and the lack of an effective housing plan following the Games. The IOCC noted that recommendations to combat homelessness were ignored and that homelessness had doubled in number as Vancouver had lost more than 1000 SRO living units within the seven year period of the bid victory.<sup>36</sup>

Collectively, the IOCC's three report cards reveal that housing and homelessness issues were impacted negatively by the Games. First, low-income tenants were adversely affected by the Games because landlords took advantage of loopholes in the housing policies, which the City had repeatedly failed to enforce. As a result, low-income tenants experienced Olympic-related evictions and rent increases. Second, homelessness was exacerbated by city beautification policies that aimed to erase the homeless from view through red-zoning and ticketing. Contrary to the Housing Table report, the IOCC's report cards positioned housing issues as irrelevant because most of their coverage was devoted to civil liberty and public consultation issues instead. As a result, the report cards were misleading because research conducted by CCAP and PIVOT showed that the decline of available low-income housing stock was contributing to a homelessness crisis in Vancouver.

## 3.2 IOCC's Stance on Homelessness, Policy, and the Olympics

### 3.2.1 Standards of Maintenance By-law

In the first interim report card, the IOCC noted that the City had "declined to use or modify (if required) the Standards of Maintenance to allow the city to ensure habitable standards in Downtown Eastside lodging houses."<sup>37</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 2, the SoM allowed the City to initiate repairs in substandard buildings and to bill the landlord afterwards. However, the IOCC noted that even though the SoM was put in place to protect tenants, the City had

consistently failed to take advantage of the by-law and initiate the necessary repairs.<sup>38</sup> Buildings that were closed by the City for violating the SoM were then sold for redevelopment into market housing, reducing the amount of available low-income housing stock.<sup>39</sup> The City's repeated failure to enforce housing policies prompted many landlords to violate the housing by-laws knowing they would not have to face the consequences of breaking the law.

The Housing Table was also concerned that violations to the SoM would allow landlords to bypass the conditions of the SRA, which regulated the demolition and conversion of SROs, stating, "some landlords deliberately neglect their buildings, and thus facilitate the approval of a demolition application."<sup>40</sup> As a result, the Housing Table called for a greater level of policy enforcement, especially regarding the City's ability to enter and repair sub-standard buildings. Enforcement was essential because it would "improve [living] conditions while keeping buildings open."<sup>41</sup> The poor enforcement of policies also allowed landlords to exploit other housing policies working to protect tenants. As a result, there were multiple ways that low-income tenants could be displaced through Olympic-related development.

### 3.2.2 Residential Tenancy Act

In its second interim report card, the IOCC asserted, "Given the resources being invested into the 2010 Olympic Games, there has been very little thought put into dealing with the impacts of the inner-city and particularly on tenants in the city."<sup>42</sup> The IOCC saw that many people would become homeless when landlords exploited loopholes in the RTA causing "renovictions" to occur.<sup>43</sup> As explained in Chapter 2, renovictions occur when landlords illegally evict their tenants in order to renovate their property to profit from rising market housing values. The IOCC calculated that 2000 SRO living units would be lost to Olympic-related renovictions

because of loopholes in the RTA and the City's poor enforcement of the legislation.<sup>44</sup> The IOCC stated there were numerous residents from at least eight SROs who were forcibly evicted or who faced illegal eviction.<sup>45</sup> The most notorious case was when the owner of the Golden Crown Hotel announced on national television that he was evicting his tenants in order to accommodate employees and construction workers for Olympic projects.<sup>46</sup> The IOCC speculated that other landlords would increase their rents to provide accommodations for Olympic workers as well. As such, the IOCC suggested that the poor enforcement of the RTA was what caused mass evictions in the lead-up to the Olympic Games. Thus, the IOCC recognized that homelessness was exacerbated because tenants were being illegally evicted by landlords who wanted to profit from the Games and because the City did not enforce the RTA. In this way, the City was contributing to the homelessness crisis.

The Housing Table made three recommendations to amend the RTA. First, the City should compensate or replace housing for tenants who experienced renoevictions.<sup>47</sup> This was a rather progressive stance on amending the RTA, because instead of recommending policies to prevent renoevictions, the Housing Table recommended that tenants be protected in the event they were evicted. As such, this recommendation presented a different way of addressing homelessness. Contrary to the CCAP and PIVOT, whose focus was on existing loopholes in the RTA, the Housing Table recognized that loopholes and renoevictions were inevitable and chose to address homelessness via a harm reduction model instead, demonstrating that amendments to housing policy needed to be creative in order to address the various and complex ways that people were being displaced. Second, recommendations were also made to allow tenants the right to refuse paying overly high rent increases following renovations.<sup>48</sup> Third, recommendations were made to ensure that rental rates were tied to the unit rather than the

tenant.<sup>49</sup> The Housing Table noted that the three recommendations were put in place “to ensure that the health and safety of existing residents, particularly residents of SRAs, is protected and that these residents are not faced with unreasonable rent increases or displacement.”<sup>50</sup> It is worth nothing that all private sector representatives of the Housing Table disagreed with the three recommendations. This is important because the potential for private owners to profit from their property could be comprised if amendments to rent increases, evictions, and renovations were put in place. This disagreement between the private and public sector representatives regarding the RTA sheds light on how difficult it is to establish agreement on policy recommendations because each sector has different views and priorities regarding the creation and use of housing policies.

### 3.2.3 Single Room Accommodation By-law

The SRA was not mentioned in any of the IOCC’s report cards. Considering that the SRA was created specifically to decrease the conversion and demolition of SRO hotels, coupled with the fact that SRO stock decreased before the Olympic Games, it is strange that the IOCC did not analyze the SRA. This suggests that housing issues became less of a priority for the IOCC as the Games approached. However, the Housing Table covered the SRA extensively, and recommended to the City that it set goals for a one-to-one replacement of all demolished SRO units, as well as higher demolition or conversion fees to deter property owners from converting their property.<sup>51</sup> Additionally, the Housing Table recommended introducing stricter measures for the application for conversion and demolition, and greater penalties for SRA violations. These recommendations were made because housing advocacy representatives were concerned that increasing development pressures and extremely low vacancy rates would place greater pressure on the SRO rental stock.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps it was no surprise that private sector representatives disagreed



with these recommendations, arguing they were “punitive and counter-productive,”<sup>53</sup> and, instead, proposed the City engage the private sector in a partnership “to develop a mixture of initiatives” to protect declining SRO stock.<sup>54</sup> It is unclear to what “mixture of initiatives” refers. However, it was clear that changes made to the SRA would deeply affect the way SRO owners held control over their living units and their ability to profit from these units, which made the private sector uneasy about policy changes and enforcement.

The private sector’s disagreement with the Housing Table illustrates, yet again, the challenges of addressing issues and solutions related to homeless and housing policy. Although both public and private sectors acknowledged that homelessness and the threat of displacement was a pressing issue, both parties held different ideas regarding possible solutions. Furthermore, the issue is complicated by the fact that much of the SRO housing stock is owned by the private sector, and there are a different set of risks and commitments involved when housing by-laws were amended. For example, increased conversion fees applied to living units can negatively affect a landlord’s profit if they are already losing money due to vacancies, and cannot convert their property due to high conversion fees. The Housing Table illustrates the difficulty in trying to create policy recommendations because of the multiple voices and players invested and involved in these negotiations.

### 3.2.4 Project Civil City

Of the nine documents analyzed in this chapter, the IOCC commented most on the PCC. The PCC is interesting because neither the IOCC, CCAP, PIVOT identified the PCC as a critical tool that aggravated homelessness in the lead up to the Vancouver Games. On the contrary, as mentioned in Chapter 2, it was representatives from opposing political parties who expressed the

most hostility to the PCC. Even more telling, their hostility was directed not at the PCC's effectiveness per se, but at whether the policy was needed at all. Specifically, the politicians were most unsettled with the spending of public tax dollars on an initiative they felt was unnecessary, which speaks to the level of support for homelessness issues in Vancouver.

What did the IOCC have to say about the PCC? From the very first Olympic interim report card, the IOCC expressed concern regarding the PCC because it was perceived as an initiative that disadvantaged marginalized populations in the DTES. Coined as a "beautification project,"<sup>55</sup> the IOCC criticized the PCC as a policy "designed expressly for the purpose of limiting the poorest and most marginalized inner-city residents' access to public spaces in Vancouver during the Games."<sup>56</sup> As explained in Chapter 1, the practice of preventing homeless people from accessing public space is called "red-zoning." Through "continued harassment by private and public police," 'undesirable' individuals are kept from using public space before, during, and after the Games.<sup>57</sup> For Vancouver 2010, police officers were employed to move homeless people from the doorways of businesses and instructed to throw away their belongings when left unattended.<sup>58</sup> Their ability to access public space was also compromised when police cordoned off public parks traditionally used by the homeless as sleeping areas.<sup>59</sup> These limitations had negative implications for the homeless because it affected their ability to remain in a public space, whom some felt was safer than places offering assistance. For example, the homeless often choose to sleep on the street to prevent theft or confiscation of their items in over-night shelters.

The homeless also experienced increased ticketing prior to the start of the Games. The IOCC explained that police ticketed homeless individuals for illegal vending because they often left their belongings unattended in the streets or in shopping carts. As a result, the IOCC argued

that homelessness was being criminalized, and recommended several times that the VPD stop conducting street sweeps, excessive ticketing, and forcefully removing homeless people from public spaces.<sup>60</sup> The PCC illustrates how a major public policy initiative, which was intended to promote public safety by decreasing public disorder, disadvantaged marginalized populations because it disproportionately targeted them through harsh policing tactics such as red-zoning and ticketing.

### 3.2.5 Assistance to Shelter Act

The ASA was not mentioned in any of the IOCC's documents. This is surprising because the ASA was heavily criticized by PIVOT and the CCAP as a beautification tool for the Games. The timing of the legislation, as well as the vaguely defined terms included in the ASA, sparked debates among activist communities in the DTES. David Eby, a member of PIVOT and the IOCC, was the most prominent critic of the ASA. Furthermore, the IOCC was concerned about the limitation of public space for inner-city citizens, which was a priority in the first and second report cards. Therefore, it seems highly unlikely the IOCC did not know about the ASA, making its silence all that more curious.

## 3.3 Carnegie Community Action Plan

A project extension of the Carnegie Community Centre Association, CCAP was a large social advocacy group that fought for housing, income, and land use issues in the DTES. CCAP was first formed in 1996 as a research and advocacy organization whose goal was “to track the real effects of poverty and gentrification on low-income DTES people, and to seek to protect and expand the assets and tenure of the low-income community in the neighbourhood.”<sup>61</sup> Its research was based largely on a collection of testimonials and life stories from low-income

residents regarding gentrification and eviction. Since 2008, the CCAP had been publishing reports that documented the status of low-income residents, SROs, gentrification, evictions, and homelessness. This chapter will focus on the reports that coincided with the years leading up to the Vancouver Olympics (2008, 2009, and 2010). These reports are important because they provide evidence as to how homelessness increased in the lead up to the 2010 Games. The reports also reveal that CCAP placed greater emphasis on presenting the facts and testimonies of low-income tenants and less on critiquing the role of Vancouver's housing and homelessness policies. In comparison to the IOCC and PIVOT, CCAP commented the least on housing policy issues.

### 3.3.1 2008 CCAP Residential Hotel Situation Report

In April 2008, CCAP released its first annual CCAP Residential Hotel Situation Report, titled, "Disappearing Homes: The Loss of Affordable Housing in the DTES." The report summarized a study on the status of SRO hotels and the actual living conditions of the SRO residents in the DTES. In total, ninety-seven privately-owned SRO hotels were included in the study.<sup>62</sup> Researchers acted as prospective tenants and surveyed each hotel as renters, asking a series of questions regarding vacancy, rental rates, damage deposits, and eligibility for rent. They took note of which buildings had signs for conversion, demolition, or sale. Non-profit hotels and provincially-owned hotels were excluded from the survey.<sup>63</sup> CCAP found that 46% of the rooms surveyed were "closed, unaffordable by people on welfare, or in grave danger of closing or becoming unaffordable."<sup>64</sup> Only twenty of the ninety-seven hotels in the survey had rooms that rented for \$375 or lower, despite the fact that the welfare rate in British Columbia was capped at \$375 per month. Among the twenty hotels mentioned in the 2008 report, only six rooms were vacant and available for rent.<sup>65</sup>

CCAP speculated that the low-income housing situation would undergo even greater strain because of the Games.<sup>66</sup> Low-income tenants were unable to rent the living units in the DTES because the units were undergoing “soft conversion.” Soft conversions occur when landlords make their living units inaccessible to low-income residents by increasing rent, restricting occupants to tourists, or renting by the day or week.<sup>67</sup> CCAP coined living units with rent increases as soft conversions because it was no longer affordable for low-income citizens, but it was not being formally converted to another type of rental unit.<sup>68</sup> SRO buildings, which catered to tourists through daily and weekly rentals, were considered soft conversions because rental rates were more expensive than SRO units renting out at monthly rates, thus tightening the number of vacant units available for low-income citizens. According to the SRA by-law, daily and weekly rentals were illegal. Despite the fact that soft conversions violated the SRA, “no level of government [was] actively working to stop these closures and soft conversions.”<sup>69</sup> CCAP’s research on soft conversions is its greatest contribution to the housing situation in the DTES because it showed how housing units were made unavailable to low-income citizens through rent increases or rent restrictions that went unaddressed by the City. Of all the watchdog groups analyzed in this chapter, CCAP was the only group to recognize this subtle form of eviction.

### 3.3.2 2009 Hotel Survey and Report

In June 2009, CCAP published its second annual hotel survey report, titled, “Still Losing Hotel Rooms.” Similar to the 2008 report, the CCAP approached hotels as prospective renters and asked about vacancies, rental rates, and eligibility of occupancy.<sup>70</sup> The 2009 survey included sixty-three SRO hotels with a total of 3268 rooms. Again, CCAP was concerned that “during the 2010 Olympics, hotels will evict monthly residents so they can rent to tourists.”<sup>71</sup> To be sure,

hotels were openly advertising for weekly and daily vacancies for the upcoming Games even though it was a violation of the SRA. One hotel, near the Olympic Village, made its location its prime selling feature. This led CCAP to speculate that the “hotels are actively seeking daily/weekly guests and could be on the verge of trying to get more guests for the Olympics.”<sup>72</sup> CCAP found that vacancy rates in 2009 were relatively the same as those in 2008. Yet, the number of rooms renting at over \$425 had increased by 44%.<sup>73</sup> Comparing the 2008 and 2009 report, CCAP’s data revealed that the ability of low-income renters to pay for rent and associated living costs and/or find an affordable living unit became most difficult one year prior to the Games.

### 3.3.3 2010 CCAP Residential Hotel Situation Report

In September 2010, CCAP published its third SRO status report, titled, “Pushed Out: Escalating Rents in the Downtown Eastside,” which surveyed ninety SRO hotels in the DTES. Unlike the previous two reports, there was no mention of the Olympic Games in the 2010 report. However, CCAP noted that trends regarding hotel closures, gentrification, and lack of effective rent control persisted in 2010. Moreover, despite the opening of newly built provincially-owned units between 2009 and 2010, CCAP noted that Vancouver had experienced a 12% increase in homelessness since 2008, suggesting the City did not sufficiently address housing and homelessness issues in the lead-up to the Games.<sup>74</sup> Although it may appear that gentrification and hotel closures were unrelated to the Games, since gentrification and hotel closures occurred before and after the Games, research has shown the Olympic Games has a far-reaching effect on a city’s housing market. For instance, gentrification and eviction trends associated with the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games reveal that gentrification, demolition, and construction of new units occurred and eventually peaked at an all-time high a decade after the 1988 Games were held.<sup>75</sup>

Each of CCAP's subsequent reports, published in 2011, 2012, and 2013, expressed concern regarding the rapid rates of gentrification among SRO hotels, thus reflecting similar trends in eviction after the Games, as recorded in Seoul. Regarding soft conversions, CCAP identified only one SRO hotel as renting on a daily/weekly basis after the Games. This was a significant decrease from 2009, in which seven hotels were found to have rented to tourists only. The decline in daily/weekly rentals may be attributed to a smaller influx of tourists following the conclusion of the Games. As a result, CCAP's research indicates that the financially lucrative Games were a motivating factor for SRO hotel owners to rent out their living units to tourists.

### 3.4 CCAP's Stance on Homelessness, Policy and the Olympics

#### 3.4.1 Standards of Maintenance By-law

CCAP recognized that the state of SROs was substandard and, in most cases, unliveable.<sup>76</sup> Many tenants lived in pest-ridden, aged, filthy units that did not meet basic health and safety standards.<sup>77</sup> Many of these living conditions also violated the SoM. Similar to the IOCC, CCAP noted that SRO closures occurred when the City refused to use the SoM to do the required repairs and bill the owners. Closures also happened when owners evicted tenants to make the building easier to sell "in a hot condo market, fuelled by expansion of the Downtown Core...and the coming Olympics."<sup>78</sup> CCAP pointed out that the Games were a major source of motivation for landlords to exploit the SoM and SRA as tools to convert their buildings into market housing units.

### 3.4.2 Residential Tenancy Act

CCAP expressed three major concerns with the RTA. First, the CCAP noted that “current rent control measures are virtually useless in the DTES” because the RTA had little to no provisions to regulate rent increases following the departure of a tenant from a living unit.<sup>79</sup> As a result, property owners could increase and charge rents to new tenants at market housing values.<sup>80</sup> This tactic limited the number of SRO units that were accessible and affordable to low-income DTES citizens. Second, CCAP had concerns with the RTA’s arbitration process. Although the RTA made provisions for tenants who were charged illegal rental rates, challenging rent increases was a financially prohibitive and time-consuming process. As a result, many tenants were deterred from asserting their rights in the first place. Third, CCAP was concerned about tenant’s rights under provincially-run SRO hotels. As noted in Chapter 2, provincially-run buildings and non-profit organizations were not subject to the RTA. Although provincially-owned hotels had better management and living conditions than privately owned SROs, due to the transitional nature of these provincially funded hotels, CCAP did not consider these living units to be secure sources of proper housing. CCAP explained that managers of provincially-run buildings had “an extraordinary amount of power over residents and that, occasionally, this has caused homelessness.”<sup>81</sup> Landlords had the power to revoke tenancies immediately and tenants had no right to enforce their rights under the RTA. As such, SRO tenants were especially helpless in appealing rent increases. CCAP showed the multiple ways tenants were vulnerable to losing their tenancies, and these concerns were echoed by the IOCC and PIVOT.



### 3.4.3 Single Room Accommodation By-law

In response to the drastic decline of living units in the DTES, CCAP noted, “The SRA bylaw to protect the SRO stock is clearly not working”<sup>82</sup> and “we fear these rooms could be lost when pressure for Olympic housing ramps up if the city refuses to enforce its SRA bylaw.”<sup>83</sup> Loopholes in the SRA created soft conversions through tourist-only renting or renting for other residential uses. Soft conversions are a good indicator of how the Olympic Games negatively impact the low-income housing market because increases in SRO-tourist buildings decrease the number of living units available to the low-income community. Figure 3 depicts the number of SRO buildings that were rented out for tourist use in the lead-up to the 2010 Games.

In 2008, CCAP identified six hotels renting on a daily or weekly basis to tourists.<sup>84</sup> Average rates of SROs converted for tourist use charged \$40 per night or \$200 dollars per week, which was much more expensive than what low-income citizens could afford.<sup>85</sup> In 2009, CCAP identified seven hotels that were renting to tourists. CCAP believed these hotel owners were motivated by the Olympic Games because six of the seven aforementioned SROs advertised



**Figure 3: All SRO buildings renting to tourists at \$40/night or \$200/week.<sup>86</sup>**

living units on a hostel website.<sup>87</sup> In 2010, CCAP found only one hotel renting at a daily or weekly rate to tourists.<sup>88</sup> This was a significant drop from the number of tourist hotels existing in 2008 and 2009, suggesting that a decrease in Olympic tourism motivated owners to convert their property back to rentals for low-income citizens. This also shows that low-income tenants were seen as disposable and therefore displaced for profit-making purposes.

### 3.4.4 Project Civil City

In all of the documents published by CCAP, there was no mention of the PCC. This is not surprising because most of CCAP's research focused mainly low-income housing issues in the DTES. That being said, CCAP did discuss the PCC in blog posts and related social media platforms, but these sources were not included as part of the data collection for this thesis. Unlike the IOCC and PIVOT, which took issue with the PCC's potential to violate human rights, CCAP

was more concerned about failed commitments to provide social housing. Jean Swanson, director of CCAP noted, “Rooming houses and hotels are falling like flies...that’s 2,400 of low-income housing likely to vanish before the Olympics.”<sup>89</sup> CCAP’s concern for housing stock illustrates how the concerns and priorities of the three housing advocacy groups varied even though the same policies were critiqued.

### 3.4.5 Assistance to Shelter Act

In all the documents published by the CCAP, there was no mention of the ASA. However, to be explored in Section 3.6.5, newspaper sources reveal that CCAP advocated against the ASA because it was seen as unconstitutional and poorly planned.

## 3.5 PIVOT Legal Society

In the fall of 2000, a law school student named John Richardson listened to a homeless man recall his experiences with police harassment in the DTES. After hearing similar testimonies from a variety of people, in 2003, Richardson responded by creating a legal firm called PIVOT Legal Society. The purpose of PIVOT was to advocate for DTES citizens and “carry out legal campaigns around policing, housing, and sex work that would result in meaningful positive change for people living in poverty.”<sup>90</sup> The term “PIVOT” referred to the exertion of “maximum pressure in order to shift society toward greater equality and inclusivity,” and represented the firm’s approach to social change. As a network of lawyers, academics, and volunteers, PIVOT’s goal was to “use the law to address the root causes of poverty and social inclusion.”<sup>91</sup> Some of PIVOT’s work included rallying for legislative reforms, fighting evictions, and challenging unconstitutional legislation. Similar to CCAP, PIVOT’s work involved a close collaboration with low-income and marginalized citizens in order to fight for change in the DTES.

This section will analyze two of PIVOT's publications. The first report is "Cracks in the Foundation: Solving the Housing Crisis in Canada's Poorest Neighbourhood," which reviewed the state of homelessness, policy, and evictions in the lead-up to the Olympic Games. This report is particularly important because it prompted other advocacy groups, such as CCAP, to create follow-up reports on the housing situation in the DTES. The second report, which was submitted to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, documented the ways human rights were being violated in order to host the 2010 Olympic Games.

### 3.5.1 "Cracks in the Foundation"

In September 2006, PIVOT published a 96-page report titled "Cracks in the Foundation: Solving the Housing Crisis in Canada's Poorest Neighbourhood." The report's introduction stated, "Without immediate action, the estimated 2.3 million visitors to the Games will see a City in the midst of an urban epidemic of poverty, and witness the clear evidence of a broken commitment to address the impact of the Olympics."<sup>92</sup> The broken commitment referred to the promises made by VANOC and government partners in the ICI. Split into seventeen parts, the report summarized PIVOT's research regarding poverty, homelessness, rising rental rates, accelerating market housing development, and the living conditions of SRO hotels. "Cracks in the Foundation" was one of the first reports to detail the housing situation in the DTES using personal interviews with SRO residents. Therefore, this report provided information that City housing reports did not provide, such as the quality of living in SRO hotel units and various injustices that SRO residents experienced with landlords and police. This report later spurred CCAP and other housing advocates to create follow-up reports on the housing situation in the DTES. This section will only focus on the issues surrounding the Olympic Games.

Between June 2005 and June 2006, a group of PIVOT lawyers, volunteers, students, and social workers collected affidavits from 160 DTES residents regarding their living experiences in the SROs. The affidavits were used to identify common factors that prevented residents from accessing low-income housing in the DTES.<sup>93</sup> The most common issues included a lack of affordable housing, difficulty accessing social assistance, illegal retention of damage deposits, landlord discrimination, illegal invasion of property by landlords, denial of utilities and services to tenants, substandard living conditions of SROs, illegal guest restriction, violent hotel managers, pest infestations, poor enforcement of policies and by-laws, gentrification, infringement of privacy rights, homelessness, and police inaction.<sup>94</sup>

Of all those issues, gentrification was identified as one of the greatest factors that led to the loss of affordable housing in the DTES because it led to SROs being closed, converted, and redeveloped into market housing. PIVOT attributed the gentrification to the coming Olympic Games, noting, “These losses not only denote a quickly shrinking SRO stock, but also signify the ongoing process of attrition that characterizes gentrification: a process that shows signs of accelerating as the 2010 Olympic Games approach.”<sup>95</sup> Coined the “Olympic effect,” PIVOT stated, “factors like the hot real estate market and the upcoming Olympics” affected real estate prices because property owners selectively bought property in the area to profit from the Games.<sup>96</sup> Evictions also increased as Olympic construction workers placed greater pressure on Vancouver’s housing market, motivating SRO owners to increase rental rates or rent their units on a daily and weekly basis.<sup>97</sup> Of all the documents analyzed in this chapter, PIVOT’s report, “Cracks in the Foundation” gave the most comprehensive coverage of the homeless situation in the DTES and how Vancouver’s housing policies affected homelessness. Unlike CCAP’s reports, which focused mostly on the facts and statistics of homelessness in the DTES, PIVOT’s

report explained the ways in which homelessness was exacerbated as a direct result of loopholes in legislation.

### 3.5.2 Submissions of PIVOT Legal Society to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Universal Periodic Review of Canada

On September 8, 2008, PIVOT submitted a report, titled, “Submissions of PIVOT Legal Society to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Universal Periodic Review of Canada” stating, “the federal, provincial, and municipal governments of Canada are not upholding basic human rights standards associated with the right to adequate housing in Vancouver, British Columbia leading up to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.”<sup>98</sup> Of all the documents analyzed for this thesis, “Submissions” was the only report to recognize that human rights were being violated due to illegal housing practices and police-based policy initiatives that were put in place to prepare for the Games.<sup>99</sup>

## 3.6 PIVOT’s Stance on Housing Policy and the Olympics

### 3.6.1 Standards of Maintenance By-law

Of the three groups, PIVOT presented the most comprehensive analysis of the SoM, focusing on two main themes. First, similar to the IOCC and CCAP, PIVOT argued the City had the power to enter substandard buildings, fix repairs, and bill the owners,<sup>100</sup> but that it was “negligent” in identifying and ordering standards of maintenance repairs.<sup>101</sup> In 1999, the City gave out 106 orders to SRO owners to mend their derelict buildings. In 2005, they City issued eight orders for repairs, and in 2006, it issued six. Meanwhile, health hazards, infestations,

insufficient heating, and a lack of utilities which plagued the majority of SRO stock in the DTES was on the rise.<sup>102</sup> Regarding sanitation in the hotels, one tenant testified, “The building is very dirty. The floors are very dirty, you have to wear your shoes even in your room. There is garbage, blood and shit in the bathrooms; they are filthy.”<sup>103</sup> Another tenant recounted his experiences with bed bugs, which was a common occurrence in SROs: “I have bed bugs. My place is infested with them. I have been up since 4 a.m. this morning because the bed bugs wake me up. I can’t sleep at all. They bite me all over. I have bites all over my feet and legs... Management does not care at all. I tell them. They just don’t care.”<sup>104</sup> These testimonies show that the living conditions of many SROs were severe but preventable if the City had inspected SRO buildings on a regular basis.

In the instance where the City identified a problem in an SRO, it usually opted to close the building rather than take extra steps to bill the owner. As a result, SoM enforcement resulted in a significant number of SRO closures in the DTES.<sup>105</sup> PIVOT thus showed how the City failed to prevent the degradation of SROs, while increasing homelessness by closing the SROs rather than initiating repairs. Therefore, low-income residents experienced additional hardships because the City did not proactively protect the tenants.

### 3.6.2 Residential Tenancy Act

PIVOT was also concerned about the RTA’s rent control system, which allowed landlords to charge new tenants increased rental rates after the previous tenants had moved out.<sup>106</sup> Although the City had set an annual maximum rent increase, PIVOT, along with CCAP, recognized that residents occupying non-profit or provincially-owned housing units were not protected by the RTA.<sup>107</sup> In the past, this exemption prevented tenants from appealing rent

increases “based on mistaken assumptions about a tenant’s income level.”<sup>108</sup> In “Cracks in the Foundation,” one female tenant said that her rent increased \$150 because of a misunderstanding about her income level. She did not receive a notice of eviction and her landlord had no evidence to justify the rent increase. It all happened so suddenly, she said. Furthermore, she could not appeal the rent increase because her building did not fall under the RTA.<sup>109</sup> As a result of the loophole in the RTA, tenants were vulnerable to eviction because they had no opportunity to fight for their rights as tenants.

If arbitration did apply, the tenants were often unaware of the how the process worked because they had “limited education, mental health problems, addictions, and little access to transportation.”<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, arbitration was often not feasible because they lacked the financial resources to use the system. Thus, even when tenants had the capacity and resources to enter into dispute, many users experienced difficulty protecting their rights because the system was incredibly complex. As one tenant explained,

Later in the morning on Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> of July I went to the Provincial Court Registry to file the Residential Arbitration Order and Certificate of Service for the Melynychuck file. [...] I was not allowed to file these documents because I had not completed a Change of Address form, and I was missing the original copy of the Decisions and Reasons of the Arbitrator. I returned to the Pivot office, filled out a Change of Address form and found the original Decisions and Reasons. I then returned to the Provincial Court Registry. Again I was not allowed to file the documents. The clerk asserted that only Residential Arbitration Orders can be filed and that Decisions and Reasons of the Arbitrator were insufficient. I returned to the Provincial Court Registry this morning on Friday July 7<sup>th</sup>. Upon receiving



service I was told for a third time that I was unable to file the [Residential Arbitration Order and Certificate of Service for the Melynychuck file]. My attempt to file them was dismissed because I was unable to swear that an appeal had not been filed against the Residential Arbitration Order.<sup>111</sup>

This tenant's experience illustrates the convoluted nature of the arbitration process. As a result, tenants were often deterred from appealing wrongful charges or claims. However, this also meant that they had no other way to assert their rights or to appeal wrongful charges, such as illegal evictions or high rent increases.

There were instances in which landlords threatened tenants to prevent them from disputing a claim in the first place. One tenant explained,

I took the eviction notice that they had given me to the Residential Housing people, and they told me that the notice on which my eviction was written was obsolete, and that the landlord had to give me a new form. However, I got threatened by [the SRO] management to leave. They threatened me with violence, taking my stuff, and calling the police. I knew I had rights and I was ready to stand up for them. I didn't pursue the wrongful eviction.<sup>112</sup>

As the Games approached, even more tenants were illegally evicted or were threatened with eviction.<sup>113</sup> One affidavit noted,

About eight months after I moved in the landlord told me that I was getting evicted because I had too many guests. He did not give me any warning. I left to go find a place to store my things and when I came back I saw my clothes and my hat in the garbage bin behind the hotel. I went up to my room and it was empty.

[...] I have been living on the street ever since I was evicted from the Cordova Rooms.<sup>114</sup>

Corrupt landlord practices disadvantaged tenants because, if they made an attempt to expose what was happening by seeking redress through the RTA system, they risked losing their living unit. Compounding these problems, the Residential Tenancy Branch often lacked the resources, and was sometimes unwilling, to assist tenants.<sup>115</sup> One affidavit noted, “On January 12, 2006, [my landlord] knocked on my door at about 9 a.m. and told me that I had until 5p.m. to be out of the building. I went to the residential tenancy office in Burnaby and asked them what I should do about it. They told me they couldn’t do anything because it was 4:15p.m. and too late to file anything.”<sup>116</sup> It was a no-win situation for tenants.

### 3.6.3 Single Room Accommodation By-law

In “Submissions of PIVOT Legal Society to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Universal Periodic Review of Canada,” PIVOT argued, “the City has failed to enforce the by-law preventing the conversion of SROs into tourist accommodation,”<sup>117</sup> with the result that “the intended effect of this by-law has been circumvented.”<sup>118</sup> This was written in response to the City’s closure of a number of SRO buildings because they violated the SoM. However, the owners took advantage of the process, converting their property into SRO hotels for tourist use.<sup>119</sup> In so doing, they were able to avoid paying the hefty demolition and conversion fee required by the City.<sup>120</sup>

The case of the American Hotel is a good illustration of how many SRO tenants were illegally evicted. On August 1, 2006, every tenant occupying the American Hotel, an old SRO located in the DTES, was given an eviction notice, notifying them that the building was to be

evacuated on September 30, 2006.<sup>121</sup> The notice stated “renovation” as the reason for eviction. However, a representative of the American Hotel later told *The Globe and Mail* that the owner’s true intention was to demolish the building and create market housing instead, making the issued eviction orders illegal.<sup>122</sup> It was later revealed that the landlord did not get any of the necessary permits to carry out the renovations. Despite the nation-wide attention this case received, the City did not address the issue, resulting in the residents’ eviction and displacement. PIVOT noted, “the City has failed to take any enforcement action against the owner of the American Hotel for his publicly stated intent to convert the American Hotel to market housing outside the provisions of the *Single Room Accommodation By-law*.”<sup>123</sup> The City’s indifferent attitude towards the American Hotel evictions demonstrated the City’s poor enforcement of the SRA, prompting landlords to continually breach the SRA without having to face repercussions.

### 3.6.4 Project Civil City

Of the two publications published by PIVOT, only the “Submissions of PIVOT Legal Society to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights” mentioned the PCC. The PCC was seen as a tool to modify “the behaviour of identifiable populations to ensure their behaviour conforms closely to the behaviour desired by businesses in the area.”<sup>124</sup> In saying this, PIVOT echoed the findings made by the IOCC regarding the ways policing tactics were being used to prevent certain groups of people from exhibiting undesirable behaviour in public, but went one step further in their critique arguing the “criminalization of necessary behaviours perpetuates homelessness”<sup>125</sup> because it prevented homeless people from accessing essential social services, never mind the fact that they could not afford to pay the fines. As a result, the PCC intensified poverty and homelessness in the DTES by further marginalizing the homeless.

### 3.6.5 Assistance to Shelter Act

Of all the documents reviewed in this chapter, none of the publications released by the IOCC, CCAP, and PIVOT mentioned the ASA. However, the ASA was prominently mentioned in various newspaper sources. Media releases from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), and articles from *The Globe and Mail*, *Vancouver Sun*, and *Vancouver Province* were used to write this chapter. The major voices who provided critique against the ASA were PIVOT and CCAP. The IOCC did not comment on the ASA. Considering the IOCC's interest in civil liberty violations, it is strange the advocacy group remained silent on this issue. Regarding the media used in this chapter, the CBC was used for analysis because it was a prominent news source for many Canadians, rural and urban, and it frequently documented events related to the Olympic Games. *The Globe and Mail* was selected because it was another popular news source for many Canadians, and it was Canada's largest national circulating newspaper. Lastly, the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Vancouver Province* were also selected because they were Vancouver's two most read local newspapers. The timeframe for analysis spanned from January 2003 to December 2010. This timeframe was chosen because 2003 was the year that Vancouver won the Olympic bid, and 2010 was the year the Olympic Games were hosted. An online keyword search was conducted in all four media platforms. Any article that included keywords "assistance to shelter" was used in this section's analysis.

The CCAP and PIVOT collectively agreed that the ASA was put in place to clear the streets of homeless people in preparation for the Games. David Eby of PIVOT noted, "It will be a great way to get the homeless off the streets, and get them out of the view of visitors for the Olympic Games."<sup>126</sup> Similar to the PCC, critics noted that the ASA was put in place for "esthetic and cosmetic reasons"<sup>127</sup> and was seen as "a ploy to beautify the Downtown Eastside for the

2010 Winter Games.”<sup>128</sup> Comments such as, “it was an attempt to sweep the homeless from Vancouver streets,”<sup>129</sup> “this is a cynical strategy by the Liberal government to force poor people off the streets for the Olympics,”<sup>130</sup> “the act would be used to round up street people in Vancouver’s downtown during the Feb. 12-28 Winter Olympics,”<sup>131</sup> and “it’s being used to displace people from particular streets for the Olympics”<sup>132</sup> reflect the shared understanding that the ASA was used as a tool to remove the homeless from the streets in the preparation for the Games.

Not surprisingly, the City was criticized for having ulterior motives because the by-law was enacted in 2009. David Eby of PIVOT noted, “The timing is very suspicious – homeless people have been dying for years. People could use this to move people out of residential areas, out of tourist areas.”<sup>133</sup> Furthermore, critics challenged the vague definition of “extreme weather” in the ASA. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the term “extreme weather” in the ASA was not defined. Eby said, “You want to talk about how extreme weather will be defined? Well, typically its defined as three to five days of rain in a row. Well, that’s February in Vancouver.”<sup>134</sup> The vague definition of “extreme weather” allowed police to interpret the definition at their own discretion and to bring the homeless into shelter.

The ASA was also criticized because the City did not have adequate resources to accommodate the homeless if the homeless were required to enter shelter. Laura Track of PIVOT noted, “The law doesn’t make sense because there aren’t enough shelter spaces.”<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, the ASA would have negative impacts because the law would “drive many homeless people into hiding” for fear of losing their belongings or police harassment.<sup>136</sup> As a result, critics argued that the ASA was not actually an initiative to help the homeless out of cold conditions, but an initiative to beautify the city in preparation for the Olympic Games.

### 3.7 Analysis

This chapter explored the publications of three advocacy groups regarding the issue of homelessness and public policy in the lead-up to the Olympic Games. Although all three groups advocated for housing issues, each group emphasized and advocated for policy-related issues differently. The first group explored in this chapter was the IOCC, whose main purpose was to monitor VANOC's progress towards attaining the commitments in the ICI. The IOCC's three most important publications, the Olympic Interim Report Cards, along with the Housing Table report, displayed how various housing by-laws exacerbated homelessness in the lead-up to the Games. The Housing Table report also illustrated the difficulty in establishing agreement between private and public sectors regarding housing policy recommendations as both sectors had different ideas and investments at stake. Instead of criticizing long-standing loopholes in housing policy, the IOCC recognized that loopholes in housing policy were inevitable and made recommendations to assist tenants in case they were illegally displaced. This type of advocacy differed from the CCAP and PIVOT, illustrating that public policy recommendation and amendments could be completed in various ways. However, due to changes in membership and politics within the group, the IOCC's concern for housing policy was short-lived. Analyzing the Olympic Interim report cards, the IOCC focused mainly on the violations that affected its member, and less on housing issues that affected the DTES. Also, in the report cards, the IOCC paid more attention to the facts and statistics concerning homelessness than the loopholes in public policy. Ultimately, the IOCC's label as the "official watchdog group" helped to promote the 2010 Olympics as the "Sustainable Games," without Vancouver actually achieving any of its social sustainability goals for housing. The history of IOCC also sheds light on the complicated

nature of managing an advocacy coalition in an environment where public-private interests are blurred.

The second Olympic critic explored in this chapter was the CCAP. A long time social advocate for housing issues in the DTES, CCAP's research provided valuable insight on the low-income housing market, particularly SROs, in the lead-up to the Olympic Games. CCAP's housing reports focused primarily on the status of SROs and provided the least information on housing and homelessness policies. However, CCAP's reports have merit. Its research on soft conversions illustrated that property owners increased rent and imposed rent restrictions on citizens in order to profit from rising property values brought about by the Games.

The third Olympic critic analyzed in this chapter was PIVOT. Of the three critics, PIVOT's publications provided the most comprehensive coverage of housing and homelessness policies in Vancouver. PIVOT's reports explored the implications and real life experiences that housing and civil liberty violations had on DTES citizens. PIVOT's report, "Cracks in the Foundation," illustrated the life experiences of numerous SRO tenants as a result of loopholes in various housing policies. And, "Submissions" was the only report that illustrated how the exploitation of public ordinances led to the violation of human rights in the lead-up to the Olympic Games.

There were two common themes expressed by the IOCC, CCAP, and PIVOT regarding the SoM. First, all three groups noted that the SoM was put in place so that the City could intervene and make repairs if buildings were unliveable. However, the City repeatedly declined to initiate repairs and bill landlords for the costs. PIVOT noted that in spite of increasing knowledge and awareness of a housing crisis in Vancouver, by-law enforcement was declining.

The City's lack of enforcement allowed property owners to leave SRO buildings uninhabitable. Second, SRO closures initiated by the City were exploited by property owners who wanted to convert their property without paying the SRA conversion fees. However, closures also limited the amount of housing stock available for low-income renters. All three groups argued that SRO closures were avoidable if the City conducted inspections and enforced the SoM on a regular basis. This suggests that homelessness was caused by the City's failure to enforce the by-law. Although the SoM was created as a preventative measure against SRO closures, the by-law had no power to protect tenants because it was not being properly enforced.

Longstanding flaws in the RTA provided landlords with ample opportunity to displace their tenants. One of the primary methods property owners used to displace their tenants was through eviction by renovation, otherwise known as "renovictions". Renovictions were illegal evictions issued by landlords to convert their property into more profitable housing. PIVOT found that many tenants experienced homelessness as a result of renovictions. Substantial rent increases also contributed to homelessness because many low-income citizens could not afford to pay market housing rates. Furthermore, tenants living in provincially-owned SRO units were displaced because they were not protected by the RTA. The RTA's arbitration system also contributed to homelessness because it was a process that disadvantaged low-income renters. In many cases, tenants could not afford to follow through with arbitration because of the costs, or because of the convoluted process. To make matters worse, tenants who entered arbitration were at risk of losing their housing unit because landlords would find ways to evict tenants who complained about their management. And, there were no opportunities to appeal a court's decision in favour of the landlord, even if the decision was considered unfair. Lastly, Vancouver did not establish sufficient services to prevent or protect people from displacement. The



Residential Tenancy Branch provided little to no protection to tenants because it was not accessible or available for many tenants who experienced tenancy violations. As such, there were little to no services to assist tenants on the verge of becoming homeless.

Similar to the RTA, the SRA displaced tenants in various ways. Thus, the IOCC, CCAP, and PIVOT each took issue with different aspects of the SRA. The rapid decline of available SRO stock prompted the IOCC to press for the production of replacement housing and stricter conversion fees. In contrast, the CCAP revealed that “soft conversions” were contributing to homelessness because low-income tenants were restricted from renting SRO units. The increasing number of soft converted SROs in the lead-up to the Games and the decline of soft converted SROs following the Games spoke to the profit motive of SRO owners. Lastly, PIVOT revealed that the City’s reluctance to enforce the SRA permitted landlords to exploit the SRA without having to face legal consequences: the American Hotel was a good illustration of this point.

Of all the policies examined for this thesis, Olympic watchdog groups did not view the PCC to be the most pressing social issue in association with the Olympic Games. Instead, it was political opponents who criticized the PCC. The PCC was designed to prevent specific populations, notably the homeless, from exhibiting undesirable behaviours in public. The PCC was enforced through ticketing and fines, thus limiting the presence marginalized people in public. As such, the PCC was criticized as a beautification measure for city re-imaging purposes and as an infringement of human rights.

Similar to the PCC, the ASA was criticized as a beautification tool used to clear the homeless off the streets for city-reimaging purposes. Rather than a measure to assist citizens in

need, the vaguely defined provisions of the ASA, in addition to its timely enactment, supported the argument that it was little more than a tool to enhance the city's image.

### 3.8 Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> David Eby, "Still waiting at the altar: Vancouver 2010's on-again, off-again, relationship with social sustainability," *COHRE Expert Workshop on Protecting and Promoting Housing Rights in the Context of Mega Events*, June 14, 2007, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition, *Olympic Oversight Interim Report Card 2010 Olympic Games*, (Vancouver: Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition, May 2007), 4.

<sup>3</sup> There was a lot of ambiguity regarding the actual role of the IOCC. Although the IOCC was, without question, recognized as the main Olympic watchdog group for the Vancouver Games, the group regularly insisted it was because they were the official watchdog group for the Games. In his paper "Still Waiting at the Altar," David Eby, a member of the IOCC noted that VANOC had assured the IOCC that they would be the "official watchdog" for the 2010 Games. However, social media platforms and media outlets often referred to the IOCC as an "unofficial watchdog" group because there was much ambiguity about the IOCC. Also, there was no official statement by VANOC which stated that the IOCC was the official watchdog. David Eby, "Still Waiting at the Altar: Vancouver 2010's on-again, off-again, relationship with social sustainability," David Eby, "Still waiting at the altar: Vancouver 2010's on-again, off-again, relationship with social sustainability," *COHRE Expert Workshop on Protecting and Promoting Housing Rights in the Context of Mega Events*, June 14, 2007, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation, *2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement* (Vancouver: Vancouver-Whistler 2010 Bid Corporation, 2002): 3

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>7</sup> Eby, "Altar," 8.

<sup>8</sup> Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation, *2010 Winter Games Inner-City Inclusive Commitment Statement* (Vancouver: Vancouver-Whistler 2010 Bid Corporation, 2002): 2-4.

<sup>9</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Oversight 2007*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table, *Report of the Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table* (Vancouver: CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.), i.

<sup>12</sup> Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table, *Report of the Inner-City Inclusive Housing Table* (Vancouver: CitySpaces Consulting Ltd.).

<sup>13</sup> Housing Table, *Housing Table*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>16</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Oversight 2007*, 6.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>18</sup> The themes are taken from subheadings under each of the four commitments.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>26</sup> Impact on Communities Coalition, *Olympic Oversight Interim Report Card: 2010 Winter Olympic Games* (Vancouver: Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition, April 19, 2009), 5.

<sup>27</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Oversight 2009*, 5.

<sup>28</sup> These themes are taken from subheadings listed under the two commitments.

<sup>29</sup> "Loopholes in the RTA" should be considered a housing issue under the ICI. However, the IOCC grouped it under "Civil Liberties and Public Safety." It is unclear why.

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- <sup>30</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Oversight 2009*, 6.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid, 11.
- <sup>33</sup> Ibid, 12.
- <sup>34</sup> Impact on Communities Coalition, *Impact on Communities Coalition 2010 Olympic Oversight Interim Report 3* (Vancouver: Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition, February 25, 2010), 1.
- <sup>35</sup> Impact on Communities Coalition, *Impact on Communities Coalition 2010 Olympic Oversight Interim Report 3* (Vancouver: Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition, February 25, 2010).
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid, 14. Regarding the IOCC's statement that homelessness had doubled within the seven year period of the bid victory, it is unclear what the exact number of people who became homeless as no numbers or additional information was provided. In addition, it is unsure whether the statement is talking about an increase in homelessness or loss of housing because the source of the statement was not cited in the report. Therefore, rather than a fact, this statement was likely written to rouse the concern of the public towards housing and homelessness issues in the lead up to the Games.
- <sup>37</sup> CCAP, *Disappearing Homes*, 10.
- <sup>38</sup> Eby, "Altar," 8.
- <sup>39</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Oversight 2007*, 10
- <sup>40</sup> Housing Table, *Housing Table*, 8.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Oversight 2009*, 10.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>44</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Oversight 2009*, 11.
- <sup>45</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Interim 2007*, 10.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Housing Table, *Housing Table*, 15.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid, 16.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid, 5.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid, 7.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>55</sup> Eby, "Altar," 2.
- <sup>56</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Interim 2007*, 22.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>58</sup> IOCC, *Olympic Interim 2009*, 13.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid, 14.
- <sup>61</sup> "About CCAP," Carnegie Community Action Project, accessed April 14, 2014, <http://ccapvancouver.wordpress.com/>.
- <sup>62</sup> Ibid, 3.
- <sup>63</sup> CCAP, *Disappearing Homes*, 3.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid, 6.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid, 2.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid, 2.
- <sup>70</sup> Carnegie Community Action Project, *Still Losing Hotel Rooms CCAP's 2009 Hotel Survey and Report* (Vancouver: Carnegie Community Action Project, June 2009), 4.
- <sup>71</sup> CCAP, *Still Losing*, 7.
- <sup>72</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid, 6.
- <sup>74</sup> Carnegie Community Action Project, Wendy Pederson and Jean Swanson, *Pushed Out Escalating rents in the Downtown Eastside* (Vancouver: Carnegie Community Action Project, September 2010), 2.

<sup>75</sup> Lisa Kim Davis, "International Events and Mass Evictions: the Seoul Olympics," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, vol. 3 (2011): 583.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> CCAP, *Disappearing Homes*, 2.

<sup>79</sup> CCAP, *Still Losing*, 13.

<sup>80</sup> CCAP, *Disappearing Homes*, 7.

<sup>81</sup> CCAP, *Pushed Out*, 5.

<sup>82</sup> CCAP, *Disappearing Homes*, 8.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 7.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 4.

<sup>86</sup> This information for this figure was taken from various sections of the 2008, 2009, and 2010 housing survey reports.

<sup>87</sup> CCAP, *Still Losing*, 7.

<sup>88</sup> CCAP, *Pushed Out*, 3 & 7.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> "Our Story," PIVOT, accessed April 14, 2014, [http://www.pivotlegal.org/our\\_story](http://www.pivotlegal.org/our_story).

<sup>91</sup> "About Pivot Legal Society," PIVOT, accessed April 14, 2014, <http://www.pivotlegal.org/about>.

<sup>92</sup> PIVOT Legal Society, *Cracks in the Foundation Solving the Housing Crisis in Canada's Poorest Neighbourhood* (Vancouver: PIVOT Legal Society, September 2006), vi.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>98</sup> PIVOT Legal Society, "Submissions of PIVOT Legal Society to the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for the Universal Periodic Review of Canada," September 8, 2008, 1.

<sup>99</sup> Following PIVOT's submission to the UN Office, a Special Rapporteur from the UN published a report regarding housing and homelessness situation in Canada as well as the possible impact of the 2010 Games on the housing situation in Vancouver. The Special Rapporteur saw "a shortage of social housing stock across the country" and is "concerned about the significant number of homeless in all parts of the country." Importantly, the Special Rapporteur "came across particularly severe situations such as in Downtown Eastside in Vancouver." The report also noted that the Vancouver Games officials "need to implement specific strategies on housing and homelessness that do not rely on criminalization of poverty, and to commit funding and resources to support [housing]." Although the UN's special report highlighted much of the housing and homelessness issues rampant in the DTES, there was no verbal or written commitment by VANOC or government partners to alleviate these issues. Although the report was discussed in the media, it did not receive very much attention by media and government officials alike. Miloon Kothari. United Nations General Assembly, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, Miloon Kothari* (Geneva: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009).

<sup>100</sup> PIVOT, *Cracks*, vi.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid, 45.

<sup>102</sup> PIVOT, "Submissions," 3.

<sup>103</sup> PIVOT, *Cracks*, 46.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 52.

<sup>105</sup> PIVOT, *Cracks*, 12.

<sup>106</sup> PIVOT, *Cracks*, v.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid, 60.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>113</sup> PIVOT, *Cracks*, 3.

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- <sup>114</sup> Ibid, 34.
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid, 60.
- <sup>116</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>117</sup> PIVOT, “Submissions,” 3.
- <sup>118</sup> PIVOT, *Cracks*, 11.
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid, 11.
- <sup>120</sup> PIVOT, *Housing Solutions*, 47.
- <sup>121</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid, 59.
- <sup>124</sup> PIVOT, “Submissions,” 4.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>126</sup> “B.C. may force homeless indoors in cold snaps,” *CBC News*, September 21, 2009.
- <sup>127</sup> Cheryl Chan, “Repeal ‘kidnapping act, say protesters; Cops won’t force people to cold-weather shelters,” *The Vancouver Province*, December 14, 2009.
- <sup>128</sup> Kim Pemberton, “Proposed shelter act a ploy to beautify city, group says,” *The Vancouver Sun*, November 26, 2009.
- <sup>129</sup> “Vancouver police won’t force homeless into shelters,” *CBC News*, December 7, 2009.
- <sup>130</sup> “Activists demand Vancouver mayor snub homeless ‘Kidnapping Act’,” *The Vancouver Province*, November 25, 2009.
- <sup>131</sup> Andy Ivens, “Homeless people won’t be strong-armed,” *The Vancouver Province*, December 8, 2009.
- <sup>132</sup> Cheryl Chan, “Repeal ‘kidnapping act, say protesters; Cops won’t force people to cold-weather shelters,” *The Vancouver Province*, December 14, 2009.
- <sup>133</sup> Ian Austin, “Homeless to be forced to shelters; ‘Vague’ bill’s timing too suspicious for critic,” *The Vancouver Province*, October 30, 2009.
- <sup>134</sup> “B.C. may force homeless indoors in cold snaps,” *CBC News*, September 21, 2009.
- <sup>135</sup> “Protesters say law allows ‘kidnapping’ of homeless,” *CBC News*, November 25, 2009.
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## Chapter 4

### 4 Summary, Conclusions, and Areas of Further Research

#### 4.1 Summary

The Olympic Games are regarded as one of the greatest sporting spectacles of all time. They are celebrated as an event unifying different countries through athletic competition. Although the Games are seen as a beacon of unity, host cities have a history of exacerbating the circumstances of marginalized communities, particularly the homeless. Over the past three decades, there has been a notable increase in evictions, gentrification, and criminalization of poverty associated with the Olympic Games. Many low-income tenants experience displacement and homelessness in the lead-up to the Games because low-income housing is often converted into market-value housing to meet rising property values. Olympic host cities have also seen an increase in ticketing, fines, and red-zoning of homeless populations. In 2003, when Vancouver won the rights to host the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, housing advocates and academics began to prepare for the potentially negative effects the Olympic Games could have on the Downtown Eastside (DTES), otherwise known as “Canada’s poorest neighbourhood.”

This thesis examined how the 2010 Olympic Games contributed to homelessness in Vancouver by: 1) investigating how different social actors attempted to use local and provincial ordinances, such as the *Standards of Maintenance By-law* (SoM), the *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA), the *Single Room Accommodation By-law* (SRA), the *Project Civil City* (PCC), and the *Assistance to Shelter Act* (ASA) to capitalize on the lucrative potential of the Olympic Games, and how their actions contributed to homelessness, and 2) documenting and analyzing the

arguments put forward by key advocacy groups that contested what was happening to low-income and homeless residents because of Olympic related development. The Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition (IOCC), the Carnegie Community Action Plan (CCAP), and PIVOT Legal Society (PIVOT) were the most prominent critics who spoke out against the policies.

The findings from this thesis reveal three things. First, this thesis showed how SRO landlords and owners were motivated by the lucrative potential of the Games to exploit and profit from public housing policies that were poorly enforced by the City, resulting in mass displacement in the DTES, a population already characterized by marginalization and poverty. Second, it revealed how loopholes in public policies exacerbated homelessness by providing landlords and owners with multiple ways to evict their tenants without legal repercussion. Third, this thesis described how Vancouver's poorly designed housing policy system, coupled with the City's longstanding refusal to enforce or amend housing by-laws, contributed to homelessness because landlords and owners were able to circumvent the regulations. Fourth, this thesis demonstrated how beautification measures are essential to the creation of a successful Olympic host city. However, this impression is often based on what a "prosperous" city looks like; that is, a city that has somehow, magically, eradicated poverty. To achieve this image cities attempt to control and marginalize certain groups of people from exhibiting behaviours that will somehow diminish this image. Altogether, these factors contributed to a housing crisis in Vancouver's DTES before the Olympic Games, an area that was already recognized as one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Canada.

### 4.1.1 Findings on Advocacy Groups

The first group examined in this thesis was the IOCC. Known for their role as an Olympic watchdog group, their most significant contribution was their assessment of VANOC's commitment to social sustainability issues through three Olympic Interim Report Cards and the Housing Table Report. These reports revealed that the IOCC's commitment towards social sustainability shifted considerably throughout its career, due in part to a change in membership and politics within the group. Initially, the Housing Table Report committed the IOCC to helping VANOC and government partners alleviate homelessness in the lead-up to the Games. However, analyzing the report cards, it was evident that housing issues became less of a priority as the years wore on. With each subsequent report card, the IOCC became more concerned about civil liberty violations, likely because it was more pertinent to the group itself, and less concerned about other commitments outlined in the Inner-City Inclusivity Statement (ICI). However, the Housing Table Report is valuable because it reveals some of the concerns the IOCC once had about various housing by-laws in the lead-up to the Games. Instead of critiquing the loopholes of various policies, the IOCC put forward suggestions to benefit low-income tenants if they were illegally displaced. The IOCC's progressive approach to housing policy differentiated the IOCC from CCAP and PIVOT because the IOCC created policy recommendations to benefit tenants in the midst of illegal housing activity instead of trying to correct loopholes, which would always exist. The Housing Table also revealed the difficulty of establishing policy recommendations because both public and private sectors had different ideas about the housing situation in Vancouver.

The CCAP was a social advocacy group that fought for housing and low-income issues in the DTES. This thesis examined three housing survey reports published by the CCAP (2008,



2009, 2010). The reports revealed that the 2010 Olympic Games had a dramatic impact on Vancouver's low-income housing market because many landlords and owners took advantage of rising property values associated with the coming Games. In particular, CCAP's findings on "soft conversions" revealed that landlords made their living units inaccessible to low-income tenants by increasing the rent and renting to tourists only. As a result, "soft conversions" limited the number of single-room occupancy (SRO) units available for low-income tenants in the lead-up to the Games. Although CCAP's research summarized the SRO situation in the DTES, their results provided the least insight and analysis on Vancouver's housing policies.

The third group analyzed in this thesis was PIVOT, which was a legal firm that advocated for low-income housing issues affecting DTES citizens, as well as issues relating to police harassment, tenancy breaches, and sex trafficking. PIVOT's research illustrated the bleak experiences of tenants living in Vancouver's SROs and the unconstitutional nature of the PCC and the ASA as they were applied to the homeless. Of the three groups, PIVOT was the only group to speak out against the unconstitutional nature of various Olympic-related policies on homeless populations.

#### 4.1.2 Findings on Policies

In the lead-up to the 2010 Olympic Games, homelessness was exacerbated by policy loopholes for two reasons. First, the City's failure to enforce municipal and provincial housing by-laws, such as the SoM, RTA, and SRA, aggravated the state of homelessness in Vancouver. Not only were tenants displaced from their homes, but the number of SRO units available to low-income tenants rapidly declined in the lead-up to the Games. Second, homelessness policies such as the PCC and ASA were harmful because they controlled the presence and behaviour of the

homeless for beautification and re-imaging purposes. Control tactics included red-zoning (preventing) homeless people from accessing certain public spaces and ticketing poverty practices. These tactics were criticized for selectively targeting the homeless and coercively limiting them from choosing where they could stay.

Created in 1981, the SoM was put in place to protect SROs from deterioration. Landlords were required by law to address all health and safety hazards in SROs. In the event that landlords did not conduct the repairs, the City could conduct the repairs and bill the landlord afterwards. If a building remained hazardous to the tenants, the City was permitted to close the SRO. The IOCC, CCAP, and PIVOT recognized that the SoM was not regularly enforced by the City. Instead, the City's efforts to enforce the SoM had declined substantially in the lead up to the Games despite the degenerating conditions of Vancouver's SROs. Instead of conducting repairs, the City usually opted to close the buildings, thereby decreasing the amount of SRO stock available to low-income tenants. Since Vancouver's housing policies were failing to protect low-income tenants prior to the Games, it was inevitable that many tenants would be abused by landlords looking to profit from rising property values.

Although the RTA was revised in 2002, tenants experienced Olympic-related displacement in a number of different ways because the City did not address pre-existing problems in the RTA. First, the RTA's rent controls made new tenants susceptible to high rent increases because the rental rate applied to the tenant and not to the rental unit. Second, tenants who lived in provincially-owned or non-profit buildings were more susceptible to losing their living unit because they were not protected under the provisions of the RTA. Third, the RTA's arbitration process often discouraged tenants from asserting their tenancy rights because it was financially-challenging and confusing. Landlords also used the arbitration process as an

intimidation tactic to prevent tenants from considering an appeal, which further highlighted power imbalances between the landlord and the tenant. Lastly, the Residential Tenancy Branch was often inaccessible and unavailable to cater to tenants whose tenancies were breached. Altogether, these factors exacerbated homelessness because tenants had little power to exercise their rights against landlords and owners who ignored the RTA.

In 2003, the City created the SRA to prevent the premature conversion and demolition of SRO housing stock in the DTES. All three advocacy groups had a different perspective on the SRA. The IOCC acknowledged that a loss in housing stock due to conversion and demolition was inevitable. As a result, public sector representatives of the Housing Table, including the IOCC, argued for the implementation of stricter conversion measures, greater administration fees, and increased funding for replacement housing to compensate for housing loss. However, private sector representatives of the Table disagreed with these measures because it interfered with the way private owners profited from their property. CCAP's research focused on "soft conversions." By measuring the numbers of soft conversions in the years leading up to the Games, CCAP's research indicated that landlords were motivated to profit from the rising market values stemming from the Games. Meanwhile, PIVOT focused on the City's failure to enforce the SRA, demonstrated by the City's inaction to address the American Hotel's conversion.

In 2007, Vancouver mayor Sam Sullivan created a public disorder initiative aimed at decreasing public nuisance and homelessness through increased policing and control tactics. Contrary to the criticism expressed by politicians, the PCC was seldom mentioned by the critics examined in this thesis, suggesting that most of the criticism resulted mainly from opposing politicians unhappy with the project. However, the IOCC and PIVOT both noted that the PCC was harmful to marginalized citizens because it prevented homeless people from accessing

certain spaces and aggressively targeted the marginalized through ticketing. The IOCC argued the intent behind the PCC was to remove the homeless from areas visible to Olympic visitors so as to provide a “clean” image of a prosperous city. Ticketing also contributed to city- reimagining as it controlled the visibility of poverty practices, such as sleeping in public spaces and loitering. Similar to other host cities, the PCC reveals that beautification measures are frequently used for the Olympic Games. However, police-based policy initiatives have a long history of negative impacts on marginalized communities. As such, the PCC was not created to protect inner-city citizens; rather it was a disabling measure, intended to control the ‘undesirable’ elements of poverty from corrupting Vancouver’s world-class image for the Games.

Similarly, the ASA was seen as a beautification tool used to clear the homeless off the streets. Created in 2009, the ASA allowed the police to use force to bring the homeless into shelters during extreme weather. The timing of the ASA was suspicious because it was put into place a year prior to the Games, despite there being a long history of deaths among the homeless caused by cold temperatures. Vaguely defined terms such as “reasonable force” and “extreme weather” were criticized as giving officers the power to coercively place the homeless into shelters at their own discretion. Housing advocates argued that the ASA was unconstitutional because it took away the right of the homeless to choose where to stay. The ASA reveals that city beautification measures selectively target the homeless, and thus violate their rights to choose to stay on the street.

In all, this thesis illustrates there needs to be greater consideration for the policy needs of low-income and homeless citizens in host cities. Also, host cities need to do a much better job of protecting the interests of low-income tenants and their right to sustainable and healthy housing. For Vancouver, low-income housing loss and tenant displacement could have been prevented if

the City had regularly enforced the SoM, SRA, and RTA. Public officials must also acknowledge that low-income and homeless communities are valued members of society, and one way to do that is to protect their right to safe and affordable housing, as well as their right to choose where they want to stay. Instead of moving the homeless into shelters and ticketing poverty practices, public officials should place greater emphasis and funding on helping the homeless to find housing and social services. Police-based tactics such as the PCC and ASA violate the rights of the homeless, as well as perpetuate the stereotypes of undesirability associated with homelessness.

## 4.2 Conclusions

This thesis reveals that Olympic-related displacement and homelessness is a multi-faceted problem that requires the cooperation of public officials, advocacy groups, researchers, and the public. Public officials must be held accountable to their promises of “social sustainability” and the reality that public policies play a crucial role in achieving that goal. Not only that, considering the long history of Olympic-related homelessness, Olympic organizing committees should begin to assume responsibility for and prevent human rights violations which occurs as a result of the Games. Everybody, including the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Olympic organizing committees, has the responsibility to uphold social sustainability and discourage human rights violations. As a result, social sustainability should not only begin and end with public policymakers. Instead, the IOC and Olympic organizing committees should take steps to ensure that social sustainability commitments are attained in each future host city. An example of this would be to install a committee member solely responsible for Olympic-related social sustainability in host cities or to rewrite the Olympic Charter to include social sustainability in the IOC’s mandate.

This thesis also shows that advocacy groups need to align their human and financial resources so that they can more effectively address important social issues like housing and homelessness for a major games. Public policy officers and Olympic organizing committees need to consider how taxpayers' dollars and government funds can be used to enhance the social circumstances of underserved in the lead up to the Games. Researchers can assist these goals by documenting and analyzing what public officials say and what they do in terms of legacy development. Scholars need to consider the local politics of the host city and the people who contribute to the Games on a municipal level. Although homelessness affects every city on a global scale, the needs of every homeless community are specific to the socio-economic, cultural, and political aspects of a city. Large-scale theoretical models are often only a band-aid solution for deeply-rooted issues like homelessness. Scholars should consider placing greater emphasis on consulting with local politicians and advocacy groups to better understand how issues related to homelessness and mega-events are being perceived. In this way, scholars can apply theoretical models to complement the dynamics of the city. This thesis also shows how the public can play a key role in sport legacies: their voice matters in terms of holding public officials accountable to their promises. The public needs to be educated as to what promises are made, how elected public officials are fulfilling their roles to protect the public good, and whether or not their stated promises were achieved. In the end, this thesis shows that mega-event hosting in and of itself does not cause homelessness. Rather, homelessness is caused by a lack of oversight and accountability on the part of public officials – and the public – who, together as partners, must ensure a better future for the people most vulnerable when the Olympic Games roll into town.

### 4.3 Areas of Further Research

There are many aspects of homelessness, public policy, and the 2010 Olympic Games that were not addressed in this thesis. This section suggests three different areas of future research that scholars can pursue to get a better understanding of the topic. First, this thesis examined a very limited number of resources pertaining to Vancouver's housing issues. Looking at a greater variety of sources can provide a greater understanding of the homelessness crisis in Vancouver. For example, an examination of local and nationally-circulated newspapers or social media publications can reveal popular perceptions of homelessness in relation to public policy and the Games. Scholars should also look at correspondences between the advocacy groups, VANOC, government partners, and voices from the community to get a better understanding of what each advocacy groups thought of public policy in relation to homelessness in the Games.

Second, this thesis was limited in the way that only the major publications of each group were consulted. An area of further research is to interview members of housing advocacy groups and also VANOC to get a better idea of what could have been done regarding the housing situation in Vancouver. Interviews can reveal what was not written in paper regarding the politics of each group and the relations shared between each group. Interviews with SRO owners should also be conducted to see whether land owners were actually motivated to profit from the Games and to identify other factors that contributed to tenant displacement. Lastly, interviews with SRO tenants can reveal the living situation of SROs and also explain the ways displacement affects tenants in the lead-up to the Olympic Games.

Third, an area of future research is to examine the legacy of the housing situation in Vancouver and assess the social impacts of the Games on Vancouver's housing market. In this

way, scholars can better understand the impact of the Olympic Games upon the low-income housing market in Vancouver. This type of study can also reveal whether commitments to improve Vancouver's low-income housing market and homelessness situation actually materialized or whether it was only rhetoric to convince citizens to invest in bringing a mega-event to a city.



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Term	Short Form	Significance
Assistance to Shelter Act	<b>ASA</b>	- Created in 2009, the ASA allowed police to transport homeless individuals by use of coercion to shelter in severely cold temperatures.
Carnegie Community Action Project	<b>CCAP</b>	- First formed in 1996 as a research and advocacy organization, the CCAP's goal was to track the effects of poverty and the lack of low-income housing in Vancouver.
Downtown Eastside	<b>DTES</b>	- Known as one of Canada's poorest neighbourhoods, activists were concerned that the Games would exacerbate the social ills of the neighbourhood, particularly homelessness, in the lead up to the Games.
Impact of the Olympics on Community Coalition	<b>IOCC</b>	- Created in 2002, the IOCC was comprised primarily of various community activists and academics. They were the main watchdog group for the Vancouver Games, but eventually disbanded due to internal differences.
Inner-city Inclusive Commitment Statement	<b>ICI</b>	- Created in 2002, the ICI was comprised of 14 promises to make the Vancouver Games the most socially sustainable Games in history. Unfortunately, many of the commitments did not come to fruition.
PIVOT Legal Society	<b>PIVOT</b>	- Created in 2000, PIVOT was a legal firm that fought against poverty and social injustices in the DTES. PIVOT provided important analyses on Vancouver's public policies and the Games.
Project Civil City	<b>PCC</b>	- Created in 2006, the PCC was created to reduce public disorder, specifically homelessness and public nuisance, in preparation for the Games.
Residential Tenancy Act	<b>RTA</b>	- Revised in 2002, the RTA outlined the regulations of a lawful tenancy agreement between the tenant and landlord. However, it often highlighted the power imbalance between the two parties, leading to unlawful evictions.
Single Room Accommodation By-law	<b>SRA</b>	- Created in 2003, the SRA regulated the conversion and demolition of single room accommodation in the DTES. However, it could not prevent landlords from leaving buildings to deteriorate permitting the issuance of demolition permits.
Single Room Occupancy hotels	<b>SRO</b>	- SRO hotels were the last stop before homelessness. Yet, these units were most vulnerable to deterioration and conversion in the lead-up to the Games.
Standards of Maintenance By-law	<b>SoM</b>	- Created in 1981, the SoM ensured that residential buildings were in conformity to health, fire, and building regulations. However, poor accountability between the City and landlords encouraged landlords to leave property unattended.
Vancouver Olympic	<b>VANOC</b>	- VANOC was the organizing committee for the Vancouver Games.

Organizing Committee		Unfortunately, many of the social sustainability commitments that they created did not come to fruition.
Vancouver Police Department	<b>VPD</b>	- Increased policing in Vancouver was an integral part to ensuring the eradication of public nuisance and homelessness. However, police-based policy initiatives have had a long history of negative impacts on the DTES' homeless population.

**Appendix 1: A glossary of all the terms used in the thesis**

## Curriculum Vitae

**Name:** Sophy Chan

**Post-secondary Education and Degrees:** University of Western Ontario  
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Graduate Teaching Assistant  
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Graduate Research Assistant  
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Undergraduate Research Assistant  
University of Western Ontario  
2011-2012

### **Publications and Presentations:**

#### **Publication:**

Journal Article Review of "Sanitizing Public Space in Olympic Host Cities: The Spatial Experiences of Marginalized Youth in 2010 Vancouver and 2012 London", *Sociology* 45, no.5 (2011), 765-781." by Jacqueline Kennelly and Paul Watt. *Olympika: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* (2013).

**Conference Proceedings:**

“Welcome to the Olympic Victims Hotel’: Narratives of Homeless in the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics” for the 20<sup>th</sup> International Seminar on Olympic Studies for Postgraduate Students Conference Proceedings

**Conference Papers:**

“Welcome to the Olympic Victims Hotel’: Narratives of Homeless in the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics” for the North American Society of Sport History Conference at St. Mary’s University 2013

“Stuck in with the Boys’: Examining Violent Femininities in Wheelchair Rugby at the 2008 Beijing and 2012 London Paralympic Games” for the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Macintosh Sociology of Sport Day Conference at Queen’s University 2014

“Supermanning Across the Court’: Wheelchair Rugby, Violent Masculinities, and Superhumans at the 2012 London Paralympic Games” for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Tri-University Conference at Western University 2014