



**LIVESTREAMED SOS FORUM TO EXPLORE HOUSING SOLUTIONS  
TO ADDRESS PUBLIC SAFETY, MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION RECOVERY**  
BC Housing, Covenant House and Former Vancouver Mayor highlight expert housing panel

VANCOUVER, B.C (Jan. 20, 2025) – Across British Columbia, the impacts of homelessness and housing unaffordability make it clear BC is experiencing a housing crisis that is eroding public safety in every community and negatively affecting our ability to support people experiencing mental health and addiction issues.

At the Save Our Streets **Communities Driving Change Forum** on January 23, the housing panel, called **A Place to Call Home: The Role of Housing in Combatting Crime, Violence and Public Disorder**, will explore successful housing models, and what the challenges are to defining and delivering housing along with services that make life better for individuals, and safer for the community.

Moderated by **Richard Zussman** of Global, the panel will feature:

- **Heidi Hartman**, Associate Vice President of B.C. Housing, the organization which develops, manages and administers a wide range of subsidized housing options across the province. B.C. Housing works with the ministry responsible for housing and about 800 housing providers to address critical gaps across the housing continuum.
- **Deb Lester**, CEO, Covenant House Vancouver. Covenant House Vancouver’s purpose is to provide, shelter, support and services to help youth aged 16-24 who are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing homelessness, trafficking or exploitation.
- **Sam Sullivan**, Founder, Global Civic Policy Society. Sullivan is a former BC Cabinet Minister and Mayor of Vancouver, who has a long history of involvement in improving Vancouver. During his time as Mayor, more than 2,000 units of social housing were initiated, and Vancouver experienced its largest drop in property crime in 50 years.

Held at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver, the Forum will speakers and professionally moderated, future-focused panel discussions (See full agenda [online](#)). While registration for the Forum is now full, people wishing to attend are invited to register to get on the waiting list for available spaces. Registration for the Forum livestream is available [here](#), or at the following link: <https://bit.ly/40eO8OY>

The SOS Communities Driving Change Forum is made possible through the support of London Drugs, Anthem Properties, Purdys Chocolatier, Pattison Food Group, National Police Federation, Independent Contractors and Business Association, CGI Digital, 7-Eleven, Gourmet Warehouse, Destination Vancouver, Downtown Van, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade and J. Gordon Enterprises. For more information about SOS and the Forum, or to subscribe to Save Our Streets news releases and the *Street Scene* newsletter, please visit [SaveOurStreets.ca](http://SaveOurStreets.ca).

**About Save Our Streets**

Save Our Streets is a coalition of 120-plus community and business organizations representing every corner of British Columbia. SOS members are committed to seeing governments bring order and public safety back to communities across British Columbia. Concerned citizen groups, and B.C. businesses interested in joining or supporting SOS are invited to submit online at [SaveOurStreets.ca](http://SaveOurStreets.ca) or contact [info@saveourstreets.ca](mailto:info@saveourstreets.ca).

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