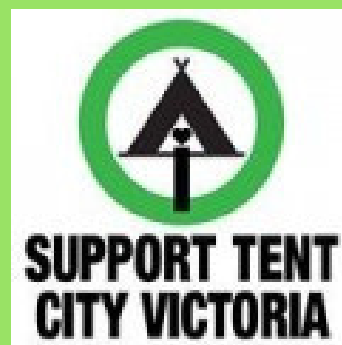


SUPER INTENT CITY SOCIETY



ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017



WWW.INTENTCITY.CA

ESTABLISHED BY THE FORMER RESIDENTS OF TENT CITY ON THE COURTHOUSE LAWN IN VICTORIA, BC

We found home, community, safety, and security at Super InTent City. Our physical, mental, and emotional health improved. The end of daily displacement was good for all of us. We had a home base where we could keep our belongings and not worry about them being stolen. When you are homeless, all of your belongings are on your back including the things you need to survive like ID, medications, and pictures of family members. We could take the time to start accessing other social supports and health services. We had space and time to get to know each other, learn to respect one another, and look after one another. We became the solution to our problems.

"Victoria's tent city, now seven months old, has become a contested symbol of British Columbia's housing crisis and growing wealth divide. Police and neighbours say it's an eyesore and a safety hazard. Anti-poverty activists call it a de facto refugee camp, blasting the province for stagnant social assistance rates and not doing enough on affordable housing. While much of BC is busy freaking out over the skyrocketing value of multi-million dollar homes in Vancouver, people living in the camp say they've been pushed out of that market, abused by social service providers and have no choice but to set up camp in public."

Vice Magazine, May 2016



We formed SIC Society in July 2016 with the goal of advocating for the rights of people most marginalized, dehumanized, and criminalized in Victoria.





Super Intent City was located on the Court house lawn from October 2015- August 2016.

Through legal and political struggle, we won 147 units of permanent housing at the 844 Johnson St building.

The Portland Hotel Society was contracted to manage the building in August 2016.



The transition from InTent City to a building managed by an outside organization has been difficult. Camera surveillance and management who do not consult us in decision making creates an institutionalized environment. Our previous sense of a supportive community has been taken away.

SIC Society hosts weekly Resident Council Meetings and is working on re-building community indoors.

- **11 residents filed a group complaint through the Residential Tenancy Branch regarding the restrictive guest policy.**
- **On July 21, 2017, the Arbitrator ruled that "the tenants have established the landlord has failed to comply with Section 28 and 30 of the Act and Section 9 of the regulation. I order the landlord to rescind the guest policy for these tenancies."**
- **The Times Colonist explains: "Lawyers for the Portland Hotel Society argued the tenancies were exempt from the act, because residents live in a 147-unit "home-based health facility"...The arbitrator ruled that the Johnson Street building was created as a response to a housing crisis, not a health crisis, and therefore is a residential property, not a home-based health facility."**

Arbitrator tosses guest restrictions at Johnson Street housing facility

Katie DeRosa / Times Colonist

AUGUST 16, 2017 06:01 AM



Supported-housing complex at 844 Johnson St. in Victoria.

Photograph By DARREN STONE, TIMES COLONIST

"Former tent city residents can't be blocked from having friends and family stay overnight at their new home at 844 Johnson St., the Residential Tenancy Branch has ruled." Times Colonist, August 2017

Dr. Bernie Pauly, a UVIC health Professor and researcher, writes in her Op-ed:

"Restrictive guest policies contribute to isolation, further the harms of poverty and substance use, and put people at increasing risk of poor health and overdose deaths...

Supportive housing does not live up to its commitment of support in an environment that puts surveillance and control ahead of social inclusion and collaboration."

TIMES  COLONIST

Bernie Pauly: Unintended consequences of housing policy

BERNIE PAULY / Times Colonist

In September, SLC Society was on a panel for the "Blue Chains" event in Surrey which included residents from other tent city's including Anita's Place in Maple Ridge, Sugar Mountain in Vancouver, and the Surrey Strip.

Jade Boyd, a UBC researcher who published "Supportive Housing and Surveillance", also spoke on the panel. Her research observes the tension between social support and coercive control in supportive housing Vancouver.

The panel spoke to a full audience, articulating the ways in which surveillance and social control negatively impacts low income people.

BREAK THE BLUE CHAINS!



Join us for a public panel about police violence, social worker control, the colonial regulation of our bodies, and the struggle to end them.

**FRIDAY, SEPT 15TH // 6:30 – 8:30 PM
SURREY CENTRAL LIBRARY, ROOM 418**

In place of the social safety net, the colonial Canadian state is using police techniques to control, regulate, punish, and displace those surviving outside of private property ownership. Strategies of containment and control are not only evident in the increasing presence and budgets of the police, crowded courtrooms, and the swelling prison system; our lives are also controlled by social agencies, our bodies regulated by powerful medical institutions, while gender and sexual violence continues to permeate both private and public spaces.

How can we imagine a world without cops, social workers and gender and sexual violence, where we have what we need to thrive and where we can form solidarities of care and support for one another? By breaking the blue chains that imprison and invade our bodies and lives, we can build our collective power against these forces of domination and reclaim agency over our lives, homes, and communities. These are the issues we want to explore in this community dialogue between grassroots communities, activists, and scholars.

Campers believe current transitional housing is unsatisfactory

[KENDRA WONG](#)

May. 2, 2017 8:30 p.m.

**Victoria's tent city is long gone,
'City' is a going concern**



Photo by Darren Stone

SIC Society at a press conference in support of the community living at the 'Whale Wall' in Reeson Park.

**Roland Hanna, of the whale wall stated:
"Our camp is here demanding affordable social housing, or at least a place where we can permanently set up camp."**

City of Victoria wants pretty parks, so it may make life hard for homeless people



Victoria City Council considered approval of five proposed amendments to the Parks Bylaw - including a six hour time limit on how long a person can stay in one area of a park & a requirement to move 100 meters after 12 hours.

Councillors did not approve proposed time limits, but did approve changes allowing staff to impound property and to temporarily close part of a park.

In a Times Colonist article regarding the Parks Bylaw amendments, Mayor Lisa Helps stated, “We’re not going to have another tent city in Victoria...We are working, pulling all the levers we can, to try to get some solutions in place for this winter so that we have people inside and not outside.”

There are over 1,400 people experiencing homelessness in Victoria, the vacancy rate is 0.5%, and many people have been on the BC Housing list for years.

In the same Times Colonist article, Councillor Madoff states, “I have to say, in my heart of hearts, seeing the direction Victoria is going in, I don’t believe we will ever get to the point where we will eradicate homelessness.”



**SIC banner
at 844
Johnson**



SIC BBQ



**Tenant
Rights
Rally
at
City Hall**

SLC Society is currently designing a proposal for a resident run housing facility. We see the following benefits:

- Understanding of the challenges to accessing and maintaining housing. We know what we need and best methods include on-the-ground knowledge of supports and services.**
- Cultivated trust with our friends and family on the street which enables us to give more effective advice and referrals. People do not want to take advice from people who don't know them and may not know anything they are going through.**
- Culturally sensitive approach people that recognizes the harms of colonization, criminalization, institutionalization, and poverty.**
- We can deal with conflict in a way that de-escalates instead of escalates.**

Thank you to our supporters:



You can reach us through:

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