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**News Release – Thursday, September 28, 2006**

## **Vancouver – Move *Now* to Keep it the World’s Most Liveable City**

**Ottawa** – A report released today by Canadian Policy Research Networks examines how well Vancouver is doing in meeting its social sustainability goals and predicts a difficult future if emerging trends are not addressed by governments.

The report, entitled *Social Sustainability in Vancouver*, was commissioned by the City of Vancouver along with the United Way of the Lower Mainland and the Vancouver Foundation. The purpose was to look at how Vancouver could maintain its reputation as one of the world’s most liveable and inclusive cities.

While Vancouver is recognized for a breathtaking mix of ocean and mountain, a vibrant multi-ethnic population, and a culture of public innovation and eco-sensitive practices, the report also finds some concerning trends. The paper’s author Merrill Cooper found that increasingly many residents are being excluded from enjoying, taking part in, and contributing to everything Vancouver has to offer.

The report notes that adult and child poverty rates are among the highest in Canada; homelessness has doubled; housing prices have soared out of reach of middle income earners; and the immigrant community is often shut out of the job market.

“If Vancouver wants to offer all residents a share of its prosperity, it will need renewed investments in health, education, settlement programs and social services to make sure basic needs are being met,” said Cooper.

Cooper emphasizes Vancouver can’t do it alone. She says taking steps will require help from provincial and federal governments – in collaboration with the voluntary, private and public sectors. The author points to the experience of other Canadian cities including Winnipeg, Waterloo and Montreal who’ve all undertaken collaborative initiatives and interventions that address the kinds of challenges Vancouver is facing.

“We are proud of our reputation as a liveable, inclusive, and green city but we recognize we are increasingly facing new pressures that will challenge our progress in these areas” noted Mayor Sam Sullivan. “The fact that we commissioned this study demonstrates we are serious about looking for solutions. However, since municipalities only get eight cents of every tax dollar, we know that these issues can only be addressed in a partnership with other governments, agencies and the private sector.”

The City will review the report and incorporate its findings into the ongoing discussions related to social development in the city.

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