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## PRESS RELEASE

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## VANCOUVER STILL TOPS IN CRIME, DESPITE NPA CLAIMS

VANCOUVER – Philip Owen and the NPA may claim in their newspaper ads to have lowered crime rates in the city, but federal numbers show Vancouver still tops major Canadian cities in virtually every crime category. COPE/Green/Independent candidates today pointed out misleading statements in the NPA's recent ad campaign.

"Crime is out of control in this city," said Vancouver's Voice council candidate Paul McDonell. "People living in Vancouver are more likely to be assaulted with an offensive weapon or to have their car or personal property stolen than residents in most other Canadian cities. The NPA's ads are riddled with half-truths and leading statements."

According to Stats-Canada figures, Vancouver's rate of personal assaults is 38 per cent greater than average rates for nine leading Canadian cities. Car thefts are 36 percent greater, while break-and-enters are a whopping 59 per cent higher than cities such as Toronto, Edmonton, Winnipeg or Calgary. Topping the list of crime-ridden communities in Vancouver is the Downtown Eastside.

"How can Philip Owen take credit for \$2 million in treatment facilities that has not been spent?" said Vancouver's Voice independent candidate Nancy Chiavario. "There have been no new beds built; that money has only been allocated. Crime will only go down when we have actually provided stable treatment options for citizens in need."

"It's no surprise that half of all Vancouver murders take place in the Downtown Eastside," said Green Party council candidate and long-time community activist Ann Livingston. "When people are forced into the streets by the loss of low-cost housing, and when Philip Owen's solution is to just have police move sick addicts from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, you can expect to see the poorest in our society even further victimized."

Reasons for Vancouver's high criminal activity, according to SFU criminologist Neil Boyd, include homelessness, lack of neighbourhood cohesion and the biggest gap between rich and poor of any city in Canada.

"A COPE/Green council will address the underlying causes of Vancouver's unacceptably high crime numbers," said council candidate Raymond Louie. "The first step will be to involve neighbourhoods in meaningful community policing, and get neighbourhood input at every stage of decision-making."