

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

For consideration at the Standing Committee meeting of City Council on June 4, 2025

2. Protecting Renters by Establishing a Tenant Advocacy Office

Submitted by: Councillor Maloney

WHEREAS

1. At the date of the 2021 census, renter households represented 54.5% of Vancouver households ([Canada Census 2021](#));
2. The overall rental vacancy rate is 1.6%, which was the highest rate measured in the past 10 years, except in 2020, and the market remains relatively tight especially in lower-priced segments ([CMHC 2024](#));
3. In 2021, 39.4% of renter households were spending more than 30% of pre-tax total income on housing and therefore their housing is not considered affordable. ([Canada Census 2021](#));
4. The City of Vancouver no longer has a department dedicated to tracking, resourcing, and supporting Vancouver renters and renter issues;
5. As the Broadway Plan progresses, and buildings elsewhere in the City require redevelopment it will be increasingly important that dedicated staff follow up on issues in a timely way. Proactive monitoring and intervention is likely to reduce stress and uncertainty for tenants and possibly prevent some tenants from being tipped into homelessness. There are currently Planning staff assigned to follow up on complaints regarding Tenant Relocation Plan (TRP) compliance as a core function of their roles. Strengthening and better connecting these staff through a tenant advocacy office could increase the impact of this work;
6. 30% of older adults in the City rent their homes and as of the last City of Vancouver homeless count, 21% of people counted were over 55 years old and almost half first experienced homelessness when they were already a senior ([City of Vancouver 2024](#));
7. Indigenous people are also more likely to be renters and face adverse rental experiences. Indigenous renters in BC face increased rates of eviction and eviction into homelessness than the non-Indigenous population. In addition, many existing buildings supporting Indigenous people at affordable rents need significant repairs. ([Indigenous Housing Needs Data Resource Library](#));
8. Council allocates a number of Renter Services Grants to organisations such as Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre (TRAC), however neither TRAC nor the BC Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB) are able to enforce tenant protections particular to the City of Vancouver, including agreements entered into by tenants covered by protections included in the Broadway Plan. There is an existing group of staff tasked with monitoring TRP compliance, including the Broadway TRP.

Strengthening and better connecting these staff through a tenant advocacy office could increase the impact of this work; and

9. While the approval and development of dedicated rental accommodation provides more stable housing for renters, this alone is insufficient to protect renters, given the breadth of challenges facing renters and the number of tenants who are not living in dedicated rental accommodation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Vancouver City Council direct staff to identify gaps in the City's system of targeting, tracking, resourcing and supporting Vancouver renters and renter issues and report back to City Council with an implementation plan, timeline and budget for establishing a department or centre within the City of Vancouver that addresses these gaps, including:

- i. Providing an official City of Vancouver point of contact for renter and tenancy issues, including standards of maintenance, tenant relocation and protections, and renovations and demovictions;
- ii. Oversight of drafting of permit conditions dealing with tenant protections to provide tiers of enforcement options, including financial bonds, that can be imposed throughout the development process;
- iii. Proactively monitoring developers for compliance with tenant protection conditions;
- iv. Enforcing conditions and obligations that benefit tenants living in the City of Vancouver that do not fall within the jurisdiction of the RTB, and impose penalties where necessary;
- v. Developing and reviewing policy and ensuring that tenants' interests are taken into account in the City's work;
- vi. Where appropriate, liaising with existing renter advocacy groups including but not limited to City of Vancouver's Renter's Advisory Committee, the Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre (TRAC) and the Vancouver Tenants Union (VTU);
- vii. Coordinating with City permits, building inspections, and licensing (including business and Short-Term Rentals) departments and data in order to protect tenants from illegal renovations and monitor rate of change to affordable rental housing stock;
- viii. Advise and work across City agencies and departments to ensure that the needs of market and non-market renters including public, non-profit, and co-op housing are being taken into account;
- ix. Options for connecting existing staff whose work includes TRP compliance and other tenant support, to identify ways to improve service delivery and efficiency to increase the impact of this City work.

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