COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

For consideration at the Standing Committee meeting on Policy and Strategic Priorities on December 2, 2026

5. Renewed Renters' Office for Vancouver Residents

Co-submitted by: Councillor Reilly and Councillor Burns

WHEREAS

1. The Vancouver Renters Office, first introduced in 2018 and implemented in 2019 was intended to "target, track, resource, and support Vancouver renters and renter issues" and was funded through Empty Homes Tax revenues. Despite staff recommendations to continue the office, it was eliminated by council decision in January 2023;

2. Renter households continue to represent a majority of households in Vancouver (approximately 55%+), highlighting the need for dedicated municipal services supporting renter residents;

3. A significant proportion of renter households continue to experience core housing need and unaffordability, with many spending more than 30% of income on rent;

4. Vancouver's rental market has experienced significant volatility, with vacancy rising in recent CMHC reporting to approximately 3.7% in Metro Vancouver (October 2025), up from 1.6% in 2024, marking the highest level in more than 30 years;

5. The secondary rental market (including investor-held condominium units) continues to make up a substantial portion of rental stock, while often offering lower security of tenure and fewer protections;

6. Existing City policies, including the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy, do not fully capture or protect renters in all housing types, particularly in smaller buildings and strata-titled rental units;

7. The City of Vancouver has advanced important renter-focused policies (including enhanced tenant protections and data tracking initiatives), but no single dedicated office exists to coordinate renter supports, data, enforcement insight, and policy development across departments;

8. Vancouver's renters continue to navigate a fragmented system of supports across City, provincial, and non-profit organizations, creating barriers to access, awareness, and timely assistance;

9. Vancouver's renters continue to navigate a fragmented system of supports across City, provincial, and non-profit organizations, creating barriers to access, awareness, and timely assistance;

10. The City amply consults coordinates with housing developers and builders, yet less with consumers and specifically renters. Better engagement with tenants as pertains to some of the core functional work of Council, Planning and Housing staff, and could lead to better outcomes for residents;

11. Renters in Vancouver today are generally worse off since the elimination of the Renters Office as rents have increased significantly and affordability has deteriorated even as vacancy rates have improved somewhat. Increased development pressure, eroding affordability, and dwindling inclusionary zoning on new developments are contributing to further pressure for Vancouver renters; and

12. In 2026, market rents remain unaffordable to media income earners in Vancouver.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

A. THAT Vancouver City Council direct staff to report back with a detailed plan in Q1 2027 to re-establish a City of Vancouver Renter's Office as a centralized, dedicated function to support renter residents, improve policy implementation, and strengthen enforcement coordination;

FURTHER THAT staff report back on any additional or reallocated funding for the Office be included in the 2027 budget, specifically through the Empty Homes Tax.

B. THAT the proposed Renter's Office include, but not be limited to, the following functions:

<u>One-Window Renter Support</u>
Provide a centralized City contact point for renter inquiries and issues and liaising with appropriate internal city departments, including:

- Standards of Maintenance complaints;
- Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy;
- Renovictions, demovictions and illegal conversions;
- Illegal evictions and bad-faith notices (in coordination with RTB); and
- Navigation support and referrals to provincial and non-profit services;

<u>Partnerships & Coordination</u>
Improve coordination between municipal and provincial systems to reduce duplication and close service gaps and collaborate with:

- Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre (TRAC);
- Residential Tenancy Branch (RTB);

- Vancouver Tenants Union (VTU); and
- Non-profit housing providers, co-ops, and legal advocacy organizations;

Data, Monitoring & Transparency
Coordinate across departments (Planning, Permits, Licensing, Short-Term Rentals) to:

- Track rental housing stock, loss, and replacement;
- Monitor renovictions, displacement trends, and compliance outcomes;
- Review and evaluate TRPP outcomes from tenant perspective;
- Advise city staff of emerging threats and opportunities, from subdividing apartments as flex space microunits with non-structural walls to home-sharing respectively;
- Improve public reporting dashboards on renter conditions and protections; and
- Provide regular, publicly accessible reporting to Council;

Enforcement
Support City enforcement teams by improving:

- Early identification of high-risk properties and repeat offenders;
- Integration of data from permits, complaints, and licensing systems; and
- Proactive compliance strategies to prevent illegal renovictions and neglect;

Policy Development & Advice
Advise Council and City departments on:

- Strengthening tenant protections;
- Expanding applicability of relocation policies;
- Addressing gaps in protection for secondary rental stock; and
- Support development of a comprehensive renter strategy or framework;

Equity & Outreach
Ensure services are accessible to:

- Low-income renters;
- Seniors, newcomers, students, and marginalized communities; and
- Non-English speakers;

Strategic Alignment
Aligning with, supporting, and informing policies, including:

- Vancouver housing goals;
- Climate resilience (preventing displacement through retrofits);
- Anti-displacement and equity priorities;
- Data transparency and open government commitments; and

- Provincial housing targets and associated legislation.

* * * * *