

**Pamela Martin**

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** September 25, 2020 7:00 PM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** RPSOM bylaw

Hello,

The by-law needs to include standards for snow and ice clearing.

Our landlord/property managers did not remove snow or ice after last winter storm until every tenant in the building complained, and still did the least they could in the most unpleasant way.

I fell twice, and would have been unable to go to work 2 days after the storm, had I parked at home.

By comparison, the other houses on the street were cleared by noon the day after the storm.

Aside from me, every other tenant in the building has mobility problems, and they were house-bound at the mercy of the landlords. Nor could they get deliveries, because the driveway was impassable.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Personal Information

Victoria, BC  
V8S 3N7

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** September 25, 2020 2:07 PM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** Rental Property Standards of Maintenance Bylaw

Hello,

I would like to give my feedback specifically about Section 28 on Mould.

In the fall of 2018 I was living in an apartment **Personal Information** in James Bay. My partner and I discovered mould growing on our furniture and belongings. We contacted the landlord about it. She dismissed the mould as just being 'mildew' and basically took no responsibility or action. We requested that an inspector come and see if there was mould and she ignored our request. We did not have the money to do this ourselves.

The process for dealing with this through the provincial Residential Tenancy Board was so discouraging that we just moved out and threw out at least 60% of our possessions because of mould damage. We felt as though there was nothing we could do unless we were willing to live in a mouldy apartment and put our health at risk to fight to stay in a mouldy apartment with a slumlord. A no win situation to say the least.

Section 28 on Mould needs to be more substantial. There needs to be more assistance to renters to have their suites inspected for mould. There needs to be bigger consequences for landlords profiting off of unsafe housing.

Housing should be a human right.  
Housing should not be for profit.  
Slumlords need to face consequences.

Thanks for your time,

**Personal Information**

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** September 29, 2020 10:22 AM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** Proposed Rental Property Standards of Maintenance bylaw

I am very happy to see Victoria council take on this issue. Personal Information a neglected old house (I believe it is registered(?) as an apartment building) which has several rooms for rent. The house is in disrepair. It needs a new roof, and I often find pieces of torn shingles blown onto my property after a wind storm. Exterior wood shingles are missing, exterior wood trim falling off. Also, there is no proper garbage receptacle so the plastic garbage bags are often torn open (raccoons?) and the garbage is spread by animals and wind, onto my property. I have spoken to one of the tenants in the place and they have told me that the owner promised a washer and dryer but there is no washing machine.

Landlords should be accountable for providing to tenants a safe place that is in good repair. I hope this new bylaw will encourage them to comply.

Personal  
Information

Victoria V8R 1M2

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information >  
**Sent:** September 30, 2020 10:33 AM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** Re RPSM

To The Mayor , Councillors and staff,

Your proposed new bylaws for rental units is a necessary law based on what we anecdotally have heard about . Most of what you are attempting to correct is in the Bylaws of the BC tenancy Act. That's a "reinvent the wheel" approach isn't it??

Nevertheless.....your proposed bylaw wording MUST have protection for the multiple landlords in Victoria that DO maintain their units. There must be the addition of wording that the responsibility of the tenant regarding plumbing, wiring, abusive use of the unit or causing infestations of rodents or bugs through their actions or lack thereof is NOT tolerated, and is NOT to fall as a financial burden onto the landlord.

Either, you must provide the means for a swift recourse for the landlord to circumvent the BC Tenancy Act to get destructive Tenants out of units they are abusing; .... or be willing to compensate said landlords the costs of remediating units where it is the action of the tenants that have caused the "breach" of your bylaws, including, any rents, or costs the tenants have not paid.

As an aside, It would also be of benefit if your City Utilities Dept. would send out a notice to the registered owner (landlord) if there has been even one non payment of the account by the tenant (if they are required under their rental agreement) for services.

We have an Order in excess of \$1000.00 against our former tenant, (that is uncollectible because she has moved in with her boyfriend and is untraceable) , who did not pay on her Utilities. As the registered owner, we were never notified until our new tenant got the outstanding bill of the previous tenant and the amount was then put on our property tax account. How many good landlords have been "stiffed" for this because you don't have a regulation in place to have it mandatory that the registered owner of a location gets a copy of the outstanding bill if not paid within the proper time frame.

That would make your plan a FAIR bylaw by only going after bad landlords and bad tenants within our cities borders.....and letting the good ones not be snagged up in the problems that will come out of two entities (city and province) trying to make Victoria (and all of BC) livable for renters.

Sincerely

Personal Information

Sent from my iPad

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** October 1, 2020 1:50 PM  
**To:** Legislative Services email

### Maintenance Standards Legislation

I am a landlord with four suites.

I actually do much more for our tenants than we are required to, so this legislation is really just a baseline for us.

We want our tenants to stay, and we create a comfortable environment, within the suites, and landscaping. Our tenants say they will provide references for US if a future tenant would like to know what kind of owners we are!

Unfortunately, not all landlords are like us.

My point in writing to you, Mayor and Council, is to say these standards are already in the RTA, although not quite the same detail.

I do not think it appropriate to have municipal legislation overlaying provincial legislation.

If you go this route, what are the mechanisms for dealing with problem landlords?

How will tenants bring infractions to the city's attention?

How will the city deal with the complaints?

Will there be fines, or prison for repeat offenders?

The City of Victoria needs to back away from this legislation as there already is provincial legislation in place, and a dispute resolution system in place.

Thank you.

Personal Information

- a character house that is beautifully maintained.

Personal Information

Victoria BC V8P 4E7

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** October 1, 2020 10:43 AM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** Landlord bylaw is unfair to landlords

To Mayor and Council:

The Housing Strategy bylaw is unfair to landlords.  
For example, the landlord is responsible to remove any mold or garbage from their rental property. If tenants leave garbage around or leave wet towels piled against the walls, they should be responsible to clean after themselves.

I hope this bylaw is not passed or it will deter future rental investment.

Sincerely,  
Personal Information  
Victoria, BC

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** October 1, 2020 10:30 AM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** Maintenance of Rental Accommodations

While we generally support the concept that rental accommodations do need to be well maintained, we question why landlords are responsible for tenant-caused destruction, abandonment of possessions, and deliberate dereliction of tenants' responsibility for these matters.

Also, we do believe that given the minimal amount of rent increases that are permitted under the Landlord Tenant Branch of the BC Government to be levied by landlords it becomes untenable to maintain units to the extent required UNLESS some financial assistance is provided to landlords via property tax relief, grants etc. which can then enable landlords to implement and maintain this vast list of requirements.

I would appreciate your response to my suggestions.

Sincere

Personal Information

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** October 2, 2020 7:32 AM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** Criticism of and concerns with the new City of Victoria bylaws being proposed  
**Attachments:** RPSOM Bylaw Draft (1).pdf

Hello,

I am a landlord, Personal Information with properties in Victoria.

I see issues with section 29 where the tenant can trigger the hiring of a "professional who is certified" in a particular trade to deal with a repair issue. Tenants are not experts and the Landlord needs the discretion to pick and choose the correct professionals.

You can't let tenants dictate what needs to be done to a building as there could be malicious intent by the tenant (especially now with lots of rents being unpaid and Landlords left holding the bag), and it could be economically unjustified and impractical to do what the tenant wants.

If the tenant asks for something unreasonable or that doesn't need to be done or to just rack up the Landlord's bills out of some sense of retribution, is the City of Victoria willing to arbitrate and to be responsible for that hassle? You are opening this up for lots of litigation. This is simply a bad bylaw proposal.

This may affect some of us small landlords (with one or two properties) who have handymen or trades that we have used in the past that are not certified as a plumber or electrician, etc.

I also have some issues with the provisions in section 27 pest control, tenants quite often are the reason that there are rodent issues, so enforcing this may be an issue.

Again, with section 28, tenants are quite often the reason there is a mould issue.

With the west coast weather if the tenants don't wipe the condensation off of the windows and it runs down and gets on the window sills it starts to grow mould if it's not wiped up. Enforcement will be an issue.

Personal Information



Dear Victoria Mayor and Council

I am writing in support of the proposed bylaw for 'Standard of Maintenance' for tenants in the Victoria area.

I understand this proposed bylaw has had a reading, but not yet adopted. I am writing in support of its adoption.

I have direct experiences of this need, as well as my fellow tenants.

Prior to the purchase of this apartment building in November 2019, and subsequent new building ownership and maintenance December of 2019, we, the tenants, at 805 Cook Street- Carmella Apartments, experienced proper standards of cleanliness, of building maintenance performed 1x weekly in our lobby, hallways and stairwells, as well, a clean common laundry area, surfaces and floor. The exterior of the building was swept, the grounds, plants watered, and groomed and the garbage area routinely organized. The car parking lot kept lit for safety.

Calls for repairs were kindly responded to and promptly.

In 2019, the family estate sale was made. We were told the new owner, Mr Kalla, was the Landlord to multiple properties in Victoria. The building then became a registered Limited Company and the tenants discovered he was a developer. Since December of 2019, the common laundry area is filthy. The floors have not been washed since December 2019. The soot and grime on the windowsills and suspended burnt out fluorescent lights, has me repelled. (and the other renters) Sometimes we have experienced an absence of carpet vacuuming for up to 8 weeks. Calls for serious repairs go unresponded for days or, are met with terseness, bordering on menacing, to what can only be described as 'Mr Kalla's hired goon'-who is called Maintenance.

March 2019, a notice regarding Covid-19 was posted on both exits and laundry room door, dated March 20<sup>th</sup> that "measures being taken to reduce the transmission of the virus...the health and safety of our tenants and employees are our top priorities." Quote.

"We have asked our maintenance staff to take extra steps to sanitize high touch surfaces, including door handles, railings etc in common areas..." quote.

None of this has ever occurred, and still has not occurred within our building. In fact, for an added touch, a solution was smeared, clouding the glass doors and left there for 4 months, including the front door.

I have even more serious concerns for sewage gas backing up from unattended toilets in empty units. (one below me) Also air locks in the water pipes, causing bacteria in our water and foul taste. I have experienced 9 weeks of random and severe intestinal discomfort, finally prompting me to seek bacterial testing for the previous mentioned.

So intrusive was the initial walk through, (7 of his staff members,) 4 units became vacant in the first two months. (by January 1st 2020) He has refused to have them re-rented, despite repeated enquiries. (I certainly hope he doesn't get the bonus to have tax write-offs for unoccupied units or Provincial Covid-related Subsidies) Last week, the number has increased to 6 empty units. The 6<sup>th</sup> tenant leaving under duress, due to harassment of neglect, 2 months of maintenance requests unanswered- abandonment; for a bathroom faucet to refunction, and leaking toilet water on his bathroom floor. Eventually his faucet gushed brown sludge.

Today Fire Inspection was called by resident, regarding Safety. Both stairwells have been unlit for approximately 2 weeks, as well as multiple hallway lights burnt out and emergency exit lights not illuminated and covered parking lot unlit.

It is, that in the business world, Limited Companies can be created for tax purposes, but I don't believe that business owners should be able to hide behind limited companies, reneging on responsibilities and common decency, Health and Safety towards the renters, nor removing or withdrawing previous standards of services.

To state that is a business loss, by keeping renters who are paying a lower rate, due to long term occupancy, (read income strife) does not wash with me.

805 Cook Street Ltd has forgone more than \$4000.00 month for ten months, by refusing to re-occupy units to other lawful, quiet, and respectful tenants. It will now be approximately \$6000.00 loss per month at his/the company's discretion.

Please vote to adopt, this proposed bylaw, 'Standard of Maintenance'.

Written With assistance,

Personal Information

805 Cook St

For my safety, please respect the confidentiality of my name.

## Pamela Martin

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**From:** Personal Information  
**Sent:** October 6, 2020 1:54 PM  
**To:** Legislative Services email  
**Subject:** Rental Property Standards of Maintenance Bylaw

Dear Victoria City Council and support services.

Having been a renter and rental property owner, I have seen and personally experienced the good, bad and ugly of both sides of this symbiotic relationship. Renters and rental property owners need each other to survive. Neither party can ignore the needs of the other without undermining the whole structure.

I understand that more than half of the citizens/families living in Victoria rent their residences/homes. I also understand that rental owners manage and operate their rentals through a wide variety of processes; from direct owner/operators of single, self contained units to corporate owners of self or professionally managed businesses that may control anywhere from a couple units to thousands of units.

The public sector may have the political and legal power to decide upon and control every aspect of each person's housing but certainly does not have the economic ability to provide housing to everyone who does not own their own home/residence and definitely not to the standard that would please all renters.

The BC Government Pension Plans may have 15-20 billion dollars worth of real estate, some portion of which is residential housing but a quick check with BC Assessment will show that this huge investment in rental ownership is a minor portion of the cost for the government to take over rental ownership of the province's total rental assets (trillions). Thus, we will never have government ownership of all rental property.

Thus governments can only control the rental process through legislation of private rental ownerships.

The City of Victoria's newly created **Rental Property Standards of Maintenance Bylaw** is a small subset of the ongoing political effort to control its citizens housing/accommodation through imposing ever more bureaucratic and stringent rules and regulations on those who create and operate rental facilities for public use. The history of the BC and municipal government's active intervention in the property rental market extends back 30-40 years.

Such legislation quickly becomes the minimum standard for all participants in any such business relationship. It also presumes that there will be an enforcement process of significant complexity to ensure the bylaw is monitored and enforced; a new administrative burden upon renters, rental property owners and all taxpayers. There is no free lunch when it comes to such intervention in an operating marketplace.

My first impression upon reading the new bylaw is that it is focused almost exclusively upon the responsibilities of the rental property owners; one side of the property rental business. From an administrative viewpoint, this is totally sensible since they are known and have financial assets, unlike many renters.

In many cases the rental property owner has invested in real estate to provide retirement income which has had minimal downside risk, unlike the stock markets. Few rental property investors are what one would classify as 'one percenters'. They invested in real estate based on recent past history of risk/reward and return on investment. Their intentions are to not become a burden and also provide value for service (i.e. good accommodation at a reasonable price).

Since they are not wealthy, any losses must be recovered through future revenues if they wish to maintain their investment.

I would propose that this perspective is also shared by most renters.

The issue really is how do we maintain balance. People who rent, like people who own rental properties are like any group; they fit a 'bell curve' (i.e. there are always a few bad ones and a few exceptional ones). The few bad ones need to be identified and removed from the process (or at least insured against to share the risk). Historically, the bad would be excluded from the process (i.e. their rental properties would be empty or no one would rent their property to them). Government involvement has increasingly eroded any past natural free market balance.

One aspect of the rental process that has become more important in recent years is the imbalance in potential cost between the renter and the property owner. Legislation and property inflation has deeply skewed the ability of one party to harm the other in a rental relationship. The owner will probably have a 1/2 million dollar asset under the control of the renter and has little hope of recovering any losses if the renter chooses to run up debts against the owner or damage the owner's property. The renter's losses may be socially but seldom financially significant due to any negative actions by the rental property owner.

It is not uncommon for unscrupulous tenants to 'extort' money from owners by refusing to leave unless paid significant sums of money. Legislation has made this action very feasible and to challenge it puts the owner in an adversarial role with the government, not the tenant; a difficult position for any rental property owner.

The worst scenario for everyone would be for the private sector to decide that building rental properties is not financially viable (that it would be equivalent to buying shares in oil companies). To some extent, this occurred 25-50 years ago; thus we now have today's shortage of rental units in some real estate markets.

The taxpayer/citizens would then have to find the money to fill what has become a difficult, yet extremely vital social service (adequate and affordable housing). For example, the 'deinstitutionalization' process that began 40 years ago and is now filling

our parks with tents and homeless people. No one expected that to happen due to actions taken back then.

The question is not whether one likes rental property owners ('Landlord' no longer describes them) but that the business relationship between renters and rental property owners that has existed for thousands of years must be rebalanced. Unless society does so, the rental market will continue to become ever more dysfunctional. It really is all about how to best manage a society's largest asset to best best serve the needs of its many stakeholders.

This bylaw is a tiny part of the whole imbalance. True, it is insignificant on its own but is another nail in the coffin of affordable housing. Why bother; all solutions start with a minor change of intent and process.

Personal Information