



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

VIA EMAIL

Ref. 621306

October 26, 2021

Her Worship Lisa Helps
Mayor of the City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria BC V8W 1P6
Email: mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca

Dear Mayor Helps:

Thank you for your correspondence of September 20, 2021, regarding the City of Victoria Council motion on the acquisition of housing stock. As Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Housing, I am pleased to respond.

I want to assure you that the Government of British Columbia is committed to creating more affordable housing solutions. In 2018, the Province introduced Homes for BC – A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia. This plan includes an historic \$7 billion investment over ten years to create 114,000 affordable homes that cover the full spectrum of housing needs for British Columbians, along with tools to stimulate the private building sector and reduce the impacts of speculation on the housing market. We are well on our way to meeting our housing goals with 53,500 units already built (9,481), in progress (21,333) or with funding or financing commitments in place (22,686), four years into our ten-year plan. We are working in partnership with non-profits, municipalities, First Nations, Indigenous housing organizations, and the private sector to accomplish a historic shift in how housing is developed and supported in British Columbia. You can read more about the 30-point plan here:

https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/homesbc/2018_homes_for_bc.pdf

The Province understands the need to protect renters, which you reference in your letter. The government has limited the annual allowable rent increase to the rate of inflation, closed the fixed-term lease loophole, and increased enforcement of tenancy laws. The government also enacted a rent freeze at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic to support British Columbians. In addition, effective May 2018, the Province made several changes to the *Residential Tenancy Act* (RTA) to provide further protection to tenants who are risk of eviction due to demolition, renovation, or conversions. You can read more about these changes to the RTA on the government website:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/residential-tenancies/changes-to-tenancy-laws?keyword=right&keyword=of&keyword=first&keyword=refusal>

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Regarding the development of a housing acquisition strategy, under my mandate as Minister responsible for Housing, I have been tasked with expanding partnerships with non-profit and co-op housing providers to acquire and preserve existing rental housing. I am pleased to hear the City of Victoria supports this mandate and the ministry will continue to involve the City of Victoria and Capital Regional District in this work as it evolves.

Thank you again for writing.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Eby', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Eby, QC
Attorney General and
Minister Responsible for Housing