



RE: Loss of Affordable Rental Housing

We are writing to add our collective voices to the growing discussion regarding the City of Langley's loss of affordable housing due to recent redevelopment, and the consequent loss of historically affordable rental units.

We are hoping to provide further context and to positively advocate for needed policy changes to address the unfolding crisis.

According to a report to Council from the City's Director of Development, "Most if not all future development applications in the City will involve vulnerable tenants." (Langley Advance Times, August 3, 2024)

In that same report to Council, it was noted that "recent redevelopment applications displaced an average of 21 tenants that required relocation, and over half of these tenants paid between \$700 to \$1000 a month rent, and many resided in the subject building for more than 5 to 10 years."

In July of this year, the City approved an updated Relocation Policy CO - 84 to increase compensation involving 'vulnerable' tenants applying to future redevelopments.

This change is a notable improvement to the earlier policy, and we support Council's decision to direct additional funding to those affected by site redevelopment. We also support the inclusion of the enhanced payment to all applications in process, for example, to the redevelopment of buildings on Eastleigh Crescent and Michaud Crescent."

However, we remain very concerned regarding the effectively non-existent affordable housing rentals in our community as average market prices increased 19% from 2022 to 2023 alone with average monthly rentals of approximately \$1705.00. (Langley Advance Times, August 3, 2024)

As a consequence, our senior serving agencies and frontline service providers have observed a steep increase in the number of marginalized and low-income seniors, in particular, who are unable to find any affordable rental accommodation and are therefore facing housing precarity and homelessness.

Given this economic reality, we strongly believe that the well-intentioned enhanced payment policy is woefully inadequate given the lack of options either currently available or being generated in the ongoing re-development process.

We therefore strongly urge that the City of Langley embrace evolving inclusionary zoning principles which generally require a minimum percentage of subsidized units within the redevelopment process.

Most recently, Metro Vancouver created a comprehensive report highlighting best practices around inclusionary zoning in order to achieve a prescriptive amount of affordable housing as a condition of approval.

The Province's new Bill 16 also dovetails with this need by creating the necessary regulatory tools to allow local governments to secure affordable housing through the adoption of an inclusionary zoning bylaw.

In this instance, we strongly support the need for the inclusion of "subsidized rent geared to income" options to address both the needs of our most economically vulnerable and also move us away from the unhelpful and outdated "affordable" designation.

Given the urgent need, we challenge our local government to expedite this analysis and to provide the necessary leadership to protect our most vulnerable by adopting these new and updated policies to adequately provide for our most basic housing needs.

In conclusion, we ask for the following:

- Relocation Policy CO - 84 be applied to all applications that are currently in the approval process, to include but not be limited to, the existing Eastleigh Crescent and Michaud Crescent sites.

- Prior to approving any redevelopment permit for affordable sites, that great care and consideration be given to maintaining the current affordable housing on site, if and when possible.
- If redevelopment is to proceed under these circumstances, that Council applies inclusionary zoning principles under a framework requiring a minimum percentage of subsidized rent geared to income units within the redevelopment process.

Sincerely,

Paul Crump - Board President, *Langley Seniors in Action*

Leslie Gaudette – Board President, *Council of Senior Citizens Organizations of BC (COSCO)*

Loretta Solomon – Board President, *Langley Senior Resources Society*

Kate Ludlam – Executive Director, *Langley Senior Resources Society*

Daniel Collins – Chief Executive Officer, *Inclusion Langley Society*

Christine McCracken – Executive Director of Programs, *Encompass Support Services Society*

Ron Bergen – Founder and President, *Ron Cares Society*

Keri Severinski – Residency Coordinator, *Bria Communities (Magnolia Gardens/Sunridge Gardens)*