



CITY OF LANGLEY

MOTION

Enhancing Housing Stability through Preventive Measures and Supportive Programs – Langley City

WHEREAS the housing crisis in British Columbia is influenced by both insufficient housing supply and escalating demand pressures, leading to affordability challenges and housing insecurity that forces many individuals and families into unsafe and precarious living conditions, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation and victimization; and

WHEREAS preventive strategies, including the provision of adequate supports and access to portable rental subsidies, are essential to maintain housing stability and prevent homelessness;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Province of British Columbia, in partnership with local governments and non-profit housing providers, expand programs to reduce housing vulnerability by expanding portable rental subsidies, enhancing support services, investing in preventive strategies, and providing direct grants to municipalities.

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Background:

Housing instability and eviction risks remain major challenge across Metro Vancouver and British Columbia. The high cost of housing has led many low-income individuals and families to reside in unsafe and unstable accommodations, heightening their exposure to various risks. To combat this issue, several programs have been implemented that:

- **Portable Rental Subsidies:** Organizations like the McLaren Housing Society administer portable rental subsidies, providing cash assistance to alleviate market rents. This approach enables clients to live independently in the community, fostering dignity and reducing the need for purpose-built subsidized housing (McClaren Housing, 2025).

Senior governments possess the fiscal capacity and policy tools necessary to address demand-side housing challenges effectively.

- **Homeless Prevention Program (HPP):** This initiative offers portable rent supplements and support services to individuals in identified at-risk groups, facilitating access to rental housing in the private market and promoting long-term stability (BC Housing, 2025).
- Programs like the Canada Housing Benefit exemplify this role by providing portable rent subsidies that assist low-income households in affording private market rentals. These subsidies are crucial in regions where rental costs are high, and housing supply is limited.

Despite these efforts, the demand for affordable and secure housing continues to outpace supply. Enhancing and expanding these programs, increasing funding for portable rental subsidies and comprehensive alongside implementing preventive measures, is crucial to reduce housing vulnerability and prevent the associated risks of exploitation and victimization.

The Role of Local Government in Leveraging Partnerships and Policies

Local governments are uniquely positioned to understand and respond to their communities' specific housing needs. By leveraging established relationships with local stakeholders, municipalities can convene diverse parties to collaborate on housing solutions. Through municipal policies, shared resources, and partnerships, local governments can effectively support initiatives like Rental Connect.

Key Strategies:

- **Policy Development:** Implementing zoning bylaws and incentives that encourage the development of affordable rental units.
- **Partnership Facilitation:** Bringing together non-profit organizations, private developers, landlords, and tenants to collaborate on housing projects.
- **Resource Allocation:** Utilizing municipal policies to support affordable housing creation and an increase of rental units across the community.

Collaborative Efforts through Rental Connect Programs

Rental Connect programs exemplify the synergy between senior and local governments. While senior governments provide the necessary financial support through portable rent subsidies, local governments facilitate the on-the-ground implementation by:

- **Engaging Landlords and Property Owners:** Encouraging participation in affordable housing programs through incentives and support.

- Offering Educational Resources: Providing training for landlords and tenants to promote successful tenancies.
- Maintaining Rental Inventories: Keeping updated records of available and compliant rental units to match with prospective tenants.

This collaborative approach ensures that housing solutions are both comprehensive and tailored to local contexts, effectively addressing the multifaceted nature of the housing crisis.

A Proactive, Collaborative, All Levels of Government Approach

By adopting a proactive and supportive approach, the Province can help ensure that all residents have access to safe, stable, and affordable housing, thereby fostering healthier and more resilient communities. For example, the Province establishing dedicated funds or grants to support local governments in the development and implementation of Rental Connect programs, can:

1. Activate the Private Rental Market:
 - Engage private landlords, property owners, and non-profit organizations to increase access to safe, affordable rental housing.
 - Provide incentives for landlords to maintain housing units in accordance with standards of maintenance requirements.
2. Enhance Prevention Strategies to Keep People Housed:
 - Expand portable rental subsidies that allow tenants flexibility in choosing safe, suitable accommodations in the private market.
 - Implement early intervention programs to assist tenants before they reach crisis situations, preventing evictions and displacement.
3. Develop a Rental Unit Inventory:
 - Establish a database of available rental units that meet municipal maintenance bylaws and other habitability standards.
 - Allow approved renters and landlords who complete education programs to be prioritized for tenancy agreements.
4. Provide Comprehensive Landlord and Tenant Education:
 - Offer landlord training and certification programs to promote knowledge of best practices, fair housing laws, and proper property management.
 - Deliver tenant education programs on budgeting, life skills, conflict resolution, and tenant rights and responsibilities.
5. Strengthen Support Services:
 - Provide tenants access to housing navigators, legal aid, and community support services.
 - Offer property maintenance education and access to repair resources for landlords to ensure the longevity of rental housing stock.

Best Practices and Examples from Other Jurisdictions

1. Portable Rental Subsidies (British Columbia & Canada-wide)

- The Rental Assistance Program (RAP) provides income-tested rent subsidies to eligible families but remains underfunded compared to demand. Expanding portable subsidies would allow more tenants to secure stable housing in the private market (BC Housing, 2024).

2. Landlord-Tenant Education (United States & Canada)

- HUD's Rental Housing Counseling Toolkit (USA) emphasizes landlord and tenant education as key to maintaining rental stability. Programs that offer training in budgeting, property maintenance, and tenant rights reduce disputes and eviction risks (HUD Exchange, 2024).
- In British Columbia, LandlordBC's I Rent It Right™ program provides free online courses for property owners, ensuring compliance with rental laws and fostering long-term tenancies (LandlordBC, 2024).

3. Rental Unit Inventory & Landlord-Tenant Matching (Queensland, Australia & Seattle, United States)

- Queensland's RentConnect Program assists people in securing private rental housing by liaising with landlords, providing financial assistance, and ensuring safe housing options (Courier Mail, 2023).
- Seattle's Housing Connector Initiative links landlords with tenants who have completed education programs and provides financial assistance for property maintenance (Seattle Housing Authority, 2024).

4. Support Services & Prevention (Local & International Models)

- Toronto's Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC) program provides early intervention services such as financial planning and conflict mediation to prevent homelessness (City of Toronto, 2024).
- The McLaren Housing Society (BC) provides case-managed rental subsidies, housing advocacy, and financial planning for tenants in precarious situations (McLaren Housing, 2024).

A Rental Connect program with provincial funding and local collaborative implementation will activate the private and affordable rental markets, support landlord-tenant relationships, and prevent housing precarity before it leads to homelessness. By providing education, rental unit inventories, portable rental subsidies, and connection to support services, this initiative will stabilize communities and reduce reliance on emergency housing interventions.

The Province of British Columbia must act to ensure that every resident can access and maintain safe, secure, and affordable housing.