

City of North Vancouver
RENTAL HOUSING STRATEGIES – 2010-2011 Implementation Update

The 'Rental Housing Strategies' were an outcome of the City's Rental Housing Working Group consultation which took place in 2007. In this process, rental housing owners, managers and investors were consulted regarding the most effective ways in which the City could support them in retaining and enhancing the market rental housing stock which many City residents depend upon.

STRATEGY	STAFF INVOLVED	ACTION
1. Retention of Rental Housing		
a) Enlarge the City's Community Energy System to incorporate existing buildings such as rental apartment buildings where economically feasible	LEC	LEC linked to older non-market Grant McNeil complex and Chesterfield House; seeking to add others
b) Lonsdale Energy Corporation will investigate the use of energy conserving individually-metered systems in rental buildings in anticipation of extending community energy in the future	LEC	Ongoing
c) Seek any energy-related incentive/subsidy programs that assist owners of older buildings with energy retrofits	Community Energy Manager; LEC	Considered within Central Lonsdale Study; undertaken in Chesterfield House renovation; promoting use of provincial program for multi-unit buildings
d) Advocate for provision of a coordinator or service facilitator to assist apartment building owners in accessing various federal / provincial programs	Community Energy Manager; Community Planner	Future Work Program
e) Develop and provide water conservation programs to rental apartment building owners	Community Energy Manager	City Water Conservation Program/Kits; promotion of provincial programs
f) Advocate for authority to apply different municipal mill rate for rental property taxes	Finance Director	2012 Work Program proposed Pilot with provincial government to test variety of potential new municipal authority including reduced tax rates for rental properties
g) Develop a pilot project where excess density of a rental apartment property is sold and transferred elsewhere, realizing funds that would be used to reinvest in upgrading the rental apartment building	Community Development	Considered within Central Lonsdale Study; Future Work Program
h) Consider development of fire safety alternatives to sprinkler systems in existing multiple unit buildings	Fire Department	Fire & Life Safety Upgrade Program adopted Feb 2011
i) Advocate for revisions to federal and provincial tax treatment of rental housing properties, including capital gains	Community Planner	Periodic letters sent to provincial government (also via Metro Van); most recent Jan.2012 via endorsement of Canadian Rental Housing Coalition Charter
j) Advocate for or partner in a rental rehabilitation loan program to enable rental property owners to upgrade their buildings	Community Energy Manager; Community Planner	Future Work Program



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k) Consider stratification of rental apartment buildings, with housing agreements and covenants to keep rental	Community Development	Considered within Central Lonsdale Study; Future Work Program
2. Replacement of Rental Housing		
a) Require replacement of rental units where rental properties are redeveloped, testing the threshold percentage of rental units which is economically viable, and consider 15-20 year time limit for rental units	Community Development	Considered within Central Lonsdale Study; 2012 Metro Vancouver Rental Housing Study will recommend policy options
b) Develop a pilot project where density transfers and rezoning is considered whereby excess density from retained rental buildings is transferred to development site, and a bonus is provided for 20 year plus rental strata units within a condo development	Community Development	Considered within Central Lonsdale Study; Future Work Program
c) Place a restrictive covenant on new strata developments by which the City requires a minimum percentage of strata units to be guaranteed rental units (i.e. 30%) (currently contravenes the Strata Act which gives strata councils authority to restrict rentals)	Community Planner	2009 Strata Act revisions strengthen ability to rent strata units
d) Publicity regarding the decreased parking requirements to .75 from 1.2 per unit and the process which permits additional suites in apartment properties	Community Development	Ongoing
e) Advocate for reinstatement of previous federal programs which stimulated construction of new rental housing (MURBs, CRSPs), and for their greater effectiveness by accounting for high land and construction costs of the lower mainland	Community Planner	Periodic letters sent to provincial government (also via Metro Van); most recent Jan.2012 via endorsement of Canadian Rental Housing Coalition Charter
3. Increase the Amount of Rental Housing		
a) Undertake research regarding strata condo buildings to assess % of rental units, number of investors, and their investment objectives	Community Planner	Future Work Program; estimated 30% of new strata units in Central and Lower Lonsdale
b) Encourage association of strata council owners to find ways to support strata councils in addressing rental unit issues	Community Planner	Future Work Program
c) Consider means of encouraging strata councils to permit greater numbers of rental units, perhaps through a property tax rebate for buildings where strata councils allow rental units	Community Planner	September 2009 Strata Act revisions strengthen ability to rent strata units
d) Advocate for provincial authority to provide a City tax break or a lower mill rate for owners/investors of rental properties	Finance Director	2012 Work Program proposed Pilot with provincial government to test variety of potential new municipal authority including reduced tax rates for rental properties
e) Require a minimum percentage of lock-off units in new strata developments	Community Development	Western Avenue Guidelines encourage lock-off units; precedence



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		for elsewhere in the City
f) Consider permitting additional rental units in existing duplexes, triplexes and townhouses	Community Development	Consider suites in duplexes in 2012
g) Permit and encourage purpose-built triplexes with suites within main dwelling	Community Development	Future Work Program
h) Develop information sheets for homeowners to encourage and outline the process to develop a suite	Community Development	Secondary Suite handouts available on City website or at Community Development Department counter
i) Consider permitting two rental units on single family house lots (secondary suite and laneway home)	Community Development	Future Work Program
j) Eliminate fees and charges for secondary suites	Community Development	Future Work Program