
TO: MAYOR & COUNCILLORS

FROM: COUNCILLOR GU

SUBJECT: NOM: PROTECTING BURNABY RENTERS IN SECONDARY RENTALS

PURPOSE: To explore and implement policy tools that equalize the treatment of renters regardless of unit type or tenure.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT staff be directed to explore and implement additional policy tools to protect tenants from development-induced displacement in secondary rentals city-wide, pending a complete 2024 Housing Needs Assessment and Provincial Tenant Assistance Policy.

BACKGROUND

In December of 2019, Burnaby City Council adopted the first iteration of the current Tenant Assistance Policy (TAP). This policy supports tenants who live in purpose-built rentals that are being redeveloped, and generally includes: Right of First Refusal, rent top-ups for interim housing, and moving costs to be covered by the developer.

In October 2022, the TAP was amended to include secondary market rental (i.e. owned by individuals but rented out to a tenant) buildings with less than five units, which are being consolidated into a larger development.

In November 2023, the provincial government passed Bill 44 and 47. Bill 44 densifies all single family (SF) and duplex zoning to allow up to 3-4 units per lot, and 6 units on lots near bus service stops (at least one bus every 15 min). Bill 47 upzones all areas to 5.0FSR within a 200m radius of a SkyTrain station, 4.0FSR within 400m, and 3.0FSR within 800m.

Bills 44 and 47 may negatively impact renters living in basement and secondary suites, families who are renting out older single-family homes, and tenants living in older stratified apartment units. In addition to these zoning changes that impact renters across Burnaby, the recently adopted Lochdale Plan and the draft Edmonds Town Centre plan include a higher number of older strata multifamily buildings that are at risk of being redeveloped in the coming years due to their age and zoning changes.

In January 2021, the City of Burnaby published a Housing Needs Report that included in-depth and comprehensive data on the housing needs of residents in Burnaby.

In April 2024, the provincial government tabled Bill 16, which signals intent to enable additional authority to municipalities to establish tenant assistance policies for displacement triggered by Bills 44 and 47. The regulatory details are not yet known.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

None.

DISCUSSION

Tenants who live in stratified apartment units, secondary/basement suites, or older single family homes should have access to support if displaced due to development. Bills 44 and 47 may expose renters to a higher risk of displacement due to potentially expedited timelines of redevelopment, as do recent or ongoing neighbourhood community plans, such as Lochdale and Edmonds Town Centre plans.

While the details of the scope of the tenant assistance will likely rely on economic analyses conducted by staff, the authorization of this work should begin now, considering pending provincial legislation (Bill 16). The direction of this work will also guide the data collection of the 2024 Housing Needs Assessment. Considering the precarious nature of secondary rental housing, it would be valuable to understand how many renters are in secondary rental housing that is at high risk of development in the 2024 Housing Needs Assessment to better create policy tools to mitigate the negative impact on these individuals.

Respectfully submitted,

COUNCILLOR GU