

Nanaimo Tenant Protections Project Recommendations Report

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Introduction

The City of Nanaimo initiated the Rental Tenant Relocation Assistance project to support tenants at risk of eviction due to the redevelopment of older apartment buildings. The project aims to establish a policy and/or regulatory framework that protects tenants facing displacement as a result of redevelopment.

Rental apartment buildings are an important source of affordable housing in Nanaimo. People living in older purpose-built rental buildings are often at greater risk of displacement and may have few housing options if their building is slated for redevelopment. The project looks at tenant protections that go beyond what the Province currently requires when a tenancy is ended due to redevelopment.

This work is grounded in “City Plan Bylaw 2022 No. 6600” (City Plan – Official Community Plan) which encourages “requiring tenant relocation plans as a condition of rezoning or redevelopment of existing mobile home parks and purpose-built rental buildings of four or more units” (C3.2.15). In addition, the *Integrated Action Plan* identifies a priority action to “create a tenant relocation policy to support tenants impacted by redevelopment and displacement.”

The recommendations in this report are intended to guide decision-makers as they consider approaches suited to Nanaimo's local context. This report builds on previous work, including a Best Practices Report with a jurisdictional scan of other municipalities, a What We Heard report summarizing feedback from engagement sessions with local interest-holders, and a renter's survey.

Tenant Protection Measures

The tenant protection measures in this section were informed by a review of best practices and community engagement. The selected measures reflect those most commonly included in tenant protection bylaws and policies across the province, with the aim of supporting tenant relocation during redevelopment and establishing a baseline of essential supports for displaced tenants.

Eligibility

Municipalities may determine the scope of their tenant protection bylaws that best reflects their local context. They have the authority to outline eligibility criteria that governs how the bylaw applies. This includes specifying a minimum number of rental units per building and determining the categories of housing to which the bylaw applies. These categories may include primary rental units, secondary rental units, non-market housing, or a combination.

PRIMARY VERSUS SECONDARY RENTAL MARKETS

Tenant Protection policies and bylaws typically apply to primary rental markets, meaning purpose-built rental apartments specifically developed for rental housing. Often thresholds are set at buildings comprising five or more units, which aligns with the *Residential Tenancy Act* threshold for right of first refusal in renovation-related evictions. Some municipalities apply lower thresholds, such as three or more units in White Rock or rental buildings of any size in Victoria.

The secondary rental market refers to housing that was not originally built as purpose-built rental but is rented out by owners. This includes units such as rented condominiums, single-detached homes, townhouses, accessory suites (e.g., basement suites or garden suites). Several municipalities including Burnaby, Victoria, North Vancouver, and Saanich, extend tenant protections to secondary rentals. Considerations for inclusion include the role of secondary rentals in overall housing supply and equity across renter households, while reasons for exclusion include lower perceived displacement risk, greater complexity in policy application and enforcement, and administrative and feasibility constraints.

Nanaimo's City Plan provides direction to include purpose-built rental buildings of four or more units. Expanding protections to secondary rental units and lot consolidations could be considered if development patterns indicate increased risk of tenant displacement in these housing forms.

NON-MARKET HOUSING

Non-market housing providers, including non-profit housing operators, social housing providers, and housing co-operatives, are treated differently across tenant protection policies due to their unique funding structures, governance models, and existing tenant relocation practices. For example, Burnaby excludes non-market housing providers, cooperatives, Provincial, city or regional government authorities, and Indigenous housing organizations. Whereas the City of Vancouver provides unique requirements for non-profits housing providers including a greater focus on communication, compensation tailored to match specific income support programs, emphasis on continuity of housing and minimizing disruption, and right of first refusal contingent on funding in the new development. Victoria takes a similar approach, including non-market housing but exempting specific rent discount requirements in right of first refusal to recognize eligibility requirements and legal agreements associate with nonmarket redevelopment.

Nanaimo non-profit housing providers and tenant advocates shared mixed perspectives on exempting non-market housing providers, noting differences across providers in established relationships, local networks, and prior experience supporting tenants. Between 2020 and 2025, the City saw four redevelopment projects with four or more units; three were non-profit housing, each likely managing tenant relocation independently.

It is recommended that instead of exempting non-market housing, the City establish guidelines or shared baseline requirements for all housing providers with flexibility for non-market providers specifically for right of first refusal.



The following sections outlines each tenant protection measure, including how it works, what was heard through engagement, examples from other municipalities, and recommendations based on engagement findings and key considerations. In addition to the core recommendations, implementation considerations are provided under each tenant protection measure, outlining potential mechanisms, timing, and delivery formats to support practical and effective implementation.

The measures covered include:

- initial notice,
- financial compensation,
- tenant relocation assistance,
- right of first refusal, and
- additional supports.

The selected examples from other municipalities were chosen for their relevance to the Nanaimo context, as well as for illustrating unique and noteworthy approaches.

An implementation scale is used to assess tenant benefits, developer financial costs, and City time and resource requirements for each measure. These components are defined below in Table 1.

Table 1: Implementation Scale

Scale	Tenant Benefit	Developer Financial Costs	City Time & Resources
Low	Informational/No financial benefits	Less than \$5,000	Less than 10 hours
Medium	Some support benefit/Some financial benefits	\$5,000 - \$10,000	10 - 25 hours
High	Significant support benefit/Significant financial benefits	More than \$10,000	More than 25 hours

Enforcement of Tenant Protections

Compliance with the tenant protection bylaw can also be enforced through standard bylaw enforcement tools, including municipal ticketing, bylaw notices, and the *Offence Act*. Table 2 outlines available enforcement options, associated mechanisms, and examples from other municipalities.

It is recommended the City establish enforcement measures to provide clear tools for addressing and responding to non-compliance.

Table 2: Municipal Enforcement Measures

Enforcement Measure	Mechanism	Examples from Other Municipalities
Bylaw Notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority under <i>Local Government Bylaw Notice Act</i> • Fines up to \$500 via local government adjudication system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to notify eligible tenants • Seeking permits (development, building, occupancy) without compliance with Tenant Assistance Plan • Termination of tenancy without Tenant Assistance Plan compliance
Municipal Ticketing Bylaw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority under <i>Community Charter</i> • Fines up to \$3,000 disputed via Courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to provide updates every four months • Failure to provide financial compensation • Failure to provide relocation assistance • Failure to provide additional assistance • Failure to provide Right of First Refusal
Prosecution under the <i>Offense Act</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority under <i>Community Charter</i> • Fines up to \$50,000 or imprisonment (not more than six months) sentenced by Courts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fines of not less than \$100 and not exceeding \$10,000 • Fines of not less than \$100 and not exceeding \$50,000

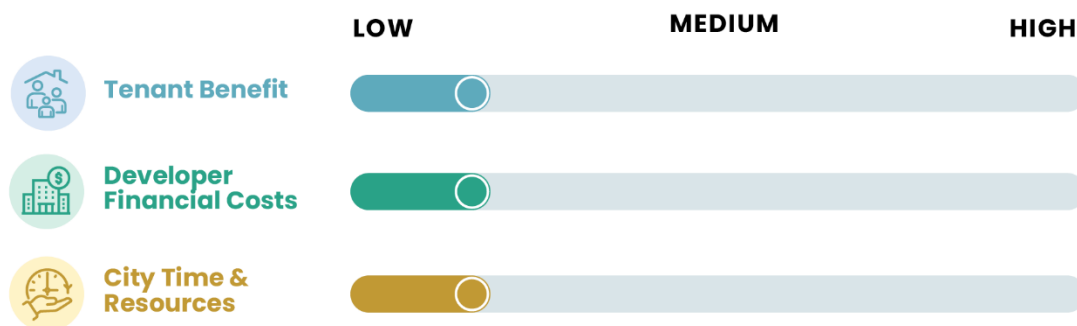
Initial Notice

Early and ongoing communication with tenants is a key element of the redevelopment process. A municipality can support clarity by establishing requirements for the format, frequency, and standardization of communications.

Mandatory meetings are a tool that can help enforce applicants' obligations under a tenant protection bylaw. These meetings require applicants to meet with affected tenants to ensure they receive clear, consistent, and timely information about the redevelopment and relocation process.

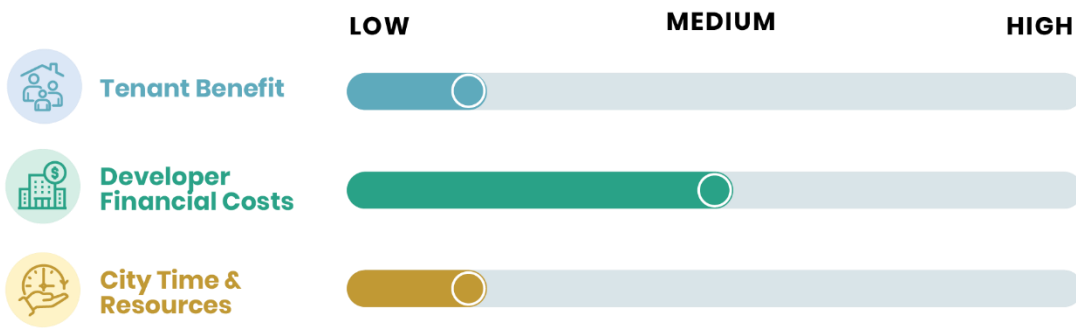
Meetings may take place at multiple stages of the redevelopment process and are often required at the inquiry phase or at the time of a redevelopment application. This initial meeting ensures tenants are informed early of their rights, the applicant's responsibilities, and the supports available to them. Meetings held at later stages may serve as milestone updates or regularly scheduled check-ins to communicate changes to redevelopment timelines or relocation plans. The presence of City staff can help ensure that meetings take place as required and that sufficient information is shared with tenants.

Figure 1: Mandatory Meetings Implementation Scale



A **required informational letter** is another tool that can support consistent and standardized communication between applicants and tenants. Issued as part of the initial notice, the letter may include information about the proposed redevelopment, a copy of the tenant protection bylaw, an overview of tenants' rights, and a summary of the applicant's responsibilities.

Figure 2: Informational Letter Implementation Scale



WHAT WE HEARD

Common Sentiment: Clear communication was a recurring theme throughout the engagement sessions. There was broad agreement that communication is an essential measure for promoting accountability and transparency among applicants, tenants, and the City.

Non-Profit Housing Providers and Tenant Advocates: Participants indicated that voluntary meetings often result in inconsistent communication and inadequate relocation outcomes. While optional meetings can be encouraged to support tenant engagement, they were not considered sufficient as a standalone measure. Requiring City staff attendance at meetings was seen to strengthen applicant compliance and help address potential gaps in tenant communication.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

- **City of Burnaby** requires mandatory tenant group meetings to be attended by City staff.
- **City of Vancouver** requires a mandatory meeting attended by City staff prior to application submission.
- **City of Langley** requires a covering letter detailing the applicant's intent to redevelop the property, along with a copy of the applicant's Tenant Relocation Plan and relevant attachments.
- **City of Kelowna** requires written notice that includes details of available financial compensation and financial assistance, to be provided a minimum of 120 days prior to the last day of tenancy. The City also suggests voluntary additional notice options, including one-on-one meetings with tenants, regular office hours to answer questions, and the option for tenants to subscribe to an email newsletter for regular updates.

RECOMMENDATIONS + IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Mandatory Meetings



Require a mandatory meeting hosted by the applicant and attended by City staff.



Clearly define the roles of each party (the City, applicants, and tenants) and establish meeting protocols to ensure meetings are effective and productive.



Consider at what stages of the redevelopment process mandatory meetings should be required.

Required Informational Letter



Establish a standardized informational letter to be provided as part of the initial notice to tenants, outlining all required information.



Define mandatory delivery methods for notices, such as hard copy letters sent by mail.



Consider developing a standardized letter template and requiring proof of delivery to tenants.

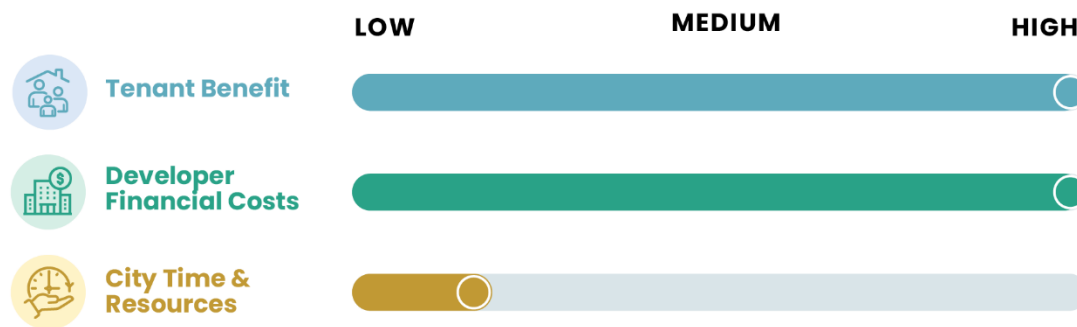


Consider offering translation services upon request.

Financial Compensation

Financial compensation above the *Rental Tenancy Act's* one month rent requirement is a common benefit provided to tenants affected by redevelopment and is the responsibility of the applicant. The City may establish the compensation threshold and method of payment, such as a lump sum payment, a rent-free period, or a combination of both. Typical compensation frameworks apply a sliding scale based on length of tenancy, which may be implemented through predefined tenure categories or a formula that calculates each tenant's eligible compensation. The City may also require partial financial compensation for tenants who vacate early, in order to support those who secure alternative accommodations ahead of schedule.

Figure 3: Financial Compensation Implementation Scale



WHAT WE HEARD

Common Sentiment: Financial compensation was widely regarded as an essential measure, with emphasis on the importance of clear, scalable, and equitable compensation based on need.

Non-Profit Housing Providers and Tenant Advocates: Participants raised concerns about inequities that can arise when greater financial compensation is tied to longer tenancy lengths. Tenants with longer tenures often benefit from lower rental rates, whereas those with shorter tenures are more likely to pay higher rents while potentially receiving less compensation. Participants also emphasized the need to consider alternative payment methods, such as phased payments or rental subsidies, rather than relying solely on lump sum payments.

Developers and Rental Building Owners: Participants generally expressed the view that existing requirements under the *Residential Tenancy Act* provide adequate tenant protections. Rental building owners emphasized the need for income testing or other assessments to identify tenant needs and determine appropriate financial compensation on a case-by-case basis.

Renter Survey: When asked to rank tenant protection measures from most to least helpful, 39% of renter survey respondents identified financial compensation as the most effective measure.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

- **City of Surrey** requires three months' current rent paid to all tenants as a lump sum, rent-free period, or a combination of both.
- **City of White Rock** requires a minimum of four months' rent and up to 44 months' rent based on length of tenancy, paid as a lump sum, rent-free period, or a combination of

both. Where a lump sum payment would exceed \$15,000, it may be made in the form of a financial instrument such as an annuity or Guaranteed Investment Certificate.

- **City of North Vancouver** requires a minimum of four months' current rent, plus an additional \$35 for each month the tenant has resided in the unit beyond five years, calculated using a set formula. This may be paid as a lump sum, rent-free period, or a combination of both.
- **District of Saanich** requires a minimum of three months' and up to six months' rent based on length of tenancy. Rent is calculated using the tenant's current rent or the CMHC average rent, whichever is higher.

RECOMMENDATIONS + IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS



Provide eligible tenants with a minimum of four months' rent in financial compensation (inclusive of the one month required under the RTA), consistent with the RTA's four-month notice of eviction requirement.



Base rent levels on the current rent set out in the tenancy agreement or the CMHC average rent, whichever is higher.



Allow tenants to choose their preferred method of receiving financial compensation. Consider payment options beyond lump sum or rent-free arrangements, such as exploring a partnership with non-profits for monthly disbursements.



Establish clear timeframes for payment, such as requiring that compensation be paid no later than the termination of tenancy, unless ongoing monthly payments have been arranged.



Consider providing a portion of financial compensation to tenants who choose to vacate earlier than required after receiving notice of eviction.



Consider requiring applicants to inform new tenants moving in after a redevelopment application has been submitted that redevelopment is planned and that they may not be eligible for tenant supports.

Tenant Relocation

Tenant displacement is one of the most significant challenges in redevelopment projects. To address this, applicants are typically responsible for providing tenant relocation assistance, which helps affected tenants secure both temporary and permanent housing during the transition. This assistance commonly takes the form of identifying comparable replacement units and covering moving expenses. In some cases, municipalities may also require the applicant to hire a tenant relocation coordinator to oversee and manage the relocation process.

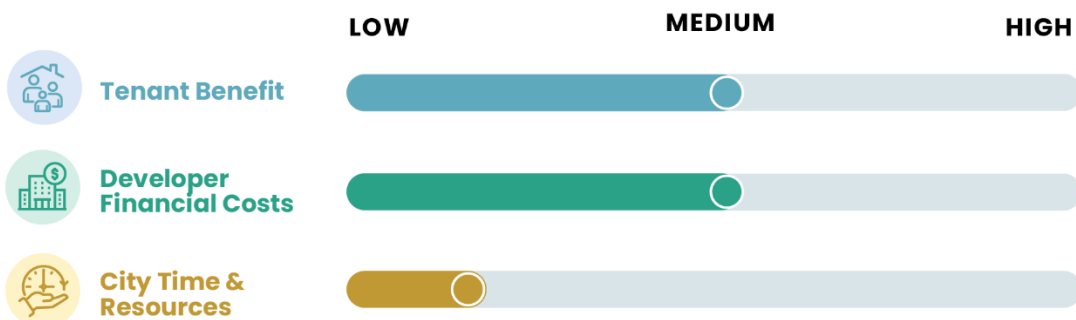
To formalize and monitor these efforts, relocation details are typically compiled into a tenant assistance plan (TAP). A TAP serves as both a planning tool and an accountability mechanism, tracking the progress of tenant relocations throughout the development process. Applicants may be required to submit an initial TAP along with subsequent progress reports at key milestones, such as specific permitting stages, to demonstrate compliance and ensure tenants are being appropriately supported.

COMPARABLE UNITS

The City may establish specific criteria governing what qualifies as a comparable unit, as well as minimum standards for the number of units that must be secured on a tenant's behalf. In practice, applicants and/or tenant relocation coordinators are commonly required to identify three comparable units for each tenant. Comparable units are typically defined as those that:

- are located within the same city or neighbourhood as the original unit;
- match the original unit in the number of bedrooms;
- have a maximum rent that does not exceed the CMHC average rent for the area; and
- are tailored to the individual tenant's needs, such as proximity to public transit, parking availability, and accessibility features.

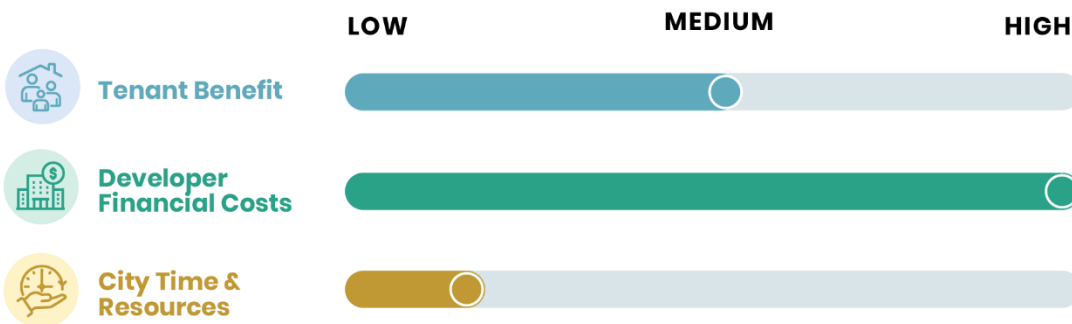
Figure 4: Comparable Units Implementation Scale



MOVING COSTS

Tenants are often entitled to additional financial compensation to help offset the costs associated with relocating. The amount provided is commonly determined by the number of bedrooms in the tenant's unit, with some cities opting for a flat lump-sum payment that applies universally regardless of unit size, while others may instead require the applicant to arrange and cover the cost of professional movers directly, without providing additional monetary compensation to tenants.

Figure 5: Moving Costs Implementation Scale



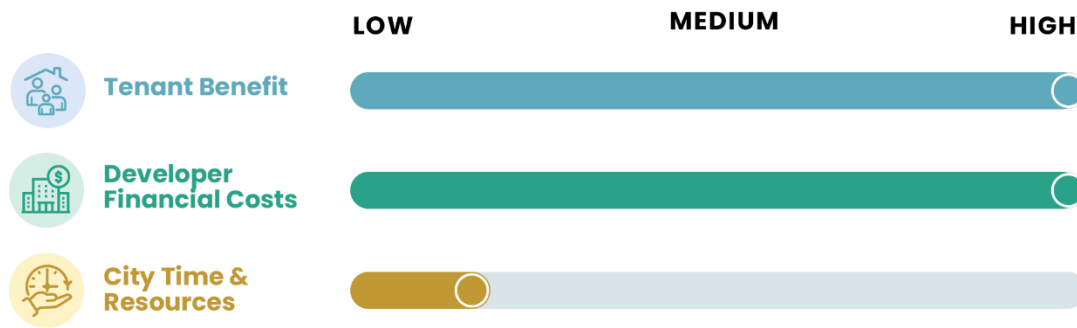
TENANT RELOCATION COORDINATOR

A tenant relocation coordinator (TRC) plays a key role in supporting tenants throughout the relocation process, with responsibilities spanning both the identification of comparable units and the coordination of moving logistics. At its core, the TRC's purpose is to ensure tenants are well-supported and kept fully informed of all available assistance.

TRCs may be employed directly by the applicant or engaged as a third-party contractor. Hiring an independent TRC can help mitigate potential conflicts of interest that may arise when the coordinator is acting on behalf of the applicant. TRC responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- coordinating and facilitating meetings and ongoing communication with tenants;
- identifying and addressing tenants' unique needs;
- sourcing and securing comparable replacement units;
- maintaining continuous relationships with affected tenants throughout the process; and
- carrying out any additional duties outlined in the tenant assistance plan.

Figure 6: Requirement for a TRC Implementation Scale



WHAT WE HEARD

Common Sentiment: Limited housing availability was identified as a significant barrier to successful tenant relocation, especially for seniors on fixed incomes and other low-income renters, who have few viable housing options and face the added pressure of rising rents in Nanaimo.

Non-Profit Housing Providers and Tenant Advocates: Securing comparable units remains a significant challenge, particularly where individual circumstances such as pet ownership, children, parking, and accessibility needs complicate the process and increase costs. While tenant relocation coordinators were recognized as a critical component of tenant relocation, concerns were raised about their effectiveness in practice, including infrequent contact, limited follow-up, and units that only minimally met tenant needs. Conflicts of interest were also flagged, as TRCs are typically hired by the applicant, which may undermine accountability. Lump-sum payments were viewed unfavourably, with tenants reportedly pressured to accept them, and alternatives such as phased payments, rental subsidies, or third-party administered funds were suggested.

Developers and Rental Building Owners: Developers expressed general support for helping tenants find alternative accommodations, while also noting the administrative burden that tenant relocation requirements can place on applicants. Incentives such as additional density were identified as useful tools to help offset associated costs. Developers also suggested that supports be directed toward priority tenants rather than applied broadly to all tenants.

Renters Survey: Among tenants who had previously experienced eviction, only 14% were able to relocate within the same neighbourhood. Survey respondents ranked financial or moving expense assistance and help finding a comparable unit as the second and third

most helpful forms of support, respectively. By contrast, support from a tenant relocation coordinator was rated as the least helpful measure relative to other options.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

- **City of Kelowna** provides a \$1,000 lump sum payment to cover moving expenses, to be paid at least 90 days before the last day of tenancy. Additional voluntary assistance may include actual moving costs and the option to hire an external TRC.
- **City of White Rock** defines a comparable unit as one located within 5 kilometres of the city boundary with rents not exceeding the CMHC average. Applicants must arrange and pay for an insured moving company and assist in identifying three comparable units, of which two must be within 5 kilometres of city boundaries and one must be a purpose-built rental. A TRC, funded by the applicant, is required.
- **District of Saanich** defines a comparable unit as one matching the existing unit in number of bedrooms and degree of accessibility. Tenants may choose between having the applicant arrange and pay for a moving company or receiving a lump-sum payment equal to one month's rent at the Saanich primary rental market average for the same unit size. A TRC must be hired or appointed by the applicant.
- **City of Victoria** defines a comparable unit as one located within Greater Victoria, with rents equal to the CMHC average or reasonably comparable to existing rents and tailored to tenant needs. Applicants must provide one of two moving assistance options: arranging and covering all costs of an insured moving company or providing compensation based on unit size, as follows: \$800 for bachelor and one-bedroom units, \$1,100 for two-bedroom units, and \$1,500 for three-bedroom or larger units. A TRC is required for all redevelopments and an independent third-party TRC is mandated where 20 or more rental units are lost.

RECOMMENDATIONS + IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Comparable Units



Require applicants search and secure a minimum of three comparable units within 90 days before the last day of tenancy.



A comparable unit should be clearly defined as one that is located within the City of Nanaimo with at least one option situated in the same general area as the existing unit, matches the existing unit in number of bedrooms, and has a

maximum rent not exceeding the greater of 10% above the tenant's current rent or the CMHC average rent for units of the same size within the City.



Applicants should be encouraged to consider additional criteria when securing comparable units, such as proximity to public transit, maintaining the same school catchment area, and placement within a pet-friendly building.



Where applicable, bylaw language should allow for sufficient flexibility to support realistic and achievable outcomes in the securement of comparable units.

Moving Costs



Tenants should receive financial compensation for moving costs based on unit size, as follows: \$1,000 for bachelor and one-bedroom units, \$1,250 for two-bedroom units, and \$1,400 for units with three or more bedrooms.



Consider tenant selected options for payment of moving related costs such as lump-sum or securing and paying the moving company directly (may be helpful for vulnerable tenants).

Tenant Relocation Coordinator



Require applicants hire an independent third-party TRC to support tenant relocation in redevelopment projects exceeding 20 units.



Consider developing a list of trusted TRC operators and/or organizations to ensure accountability and reduce administrative costs required in sourcing and vetting TRCs for applicants.

Right of First Refusal

The right of first refusal (ROFR) gives displaced tenants priority access to return to a unit in the redeveloped building or to another unit owned by the same property owner. ROFR provisions may include discounted rents or purchase prices, typically benchmarked against CMHC average rents, with discounts commonly ranging from 10 to 25%. Some municipalities require ROFR without financial discounts or leave the terms to the discretion of the applicant.

Figure 7: Right of First Refusal without Discounts Implementation Scale

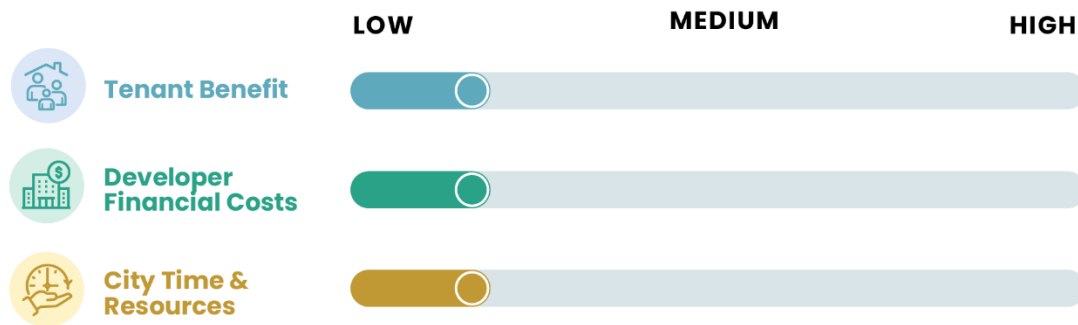
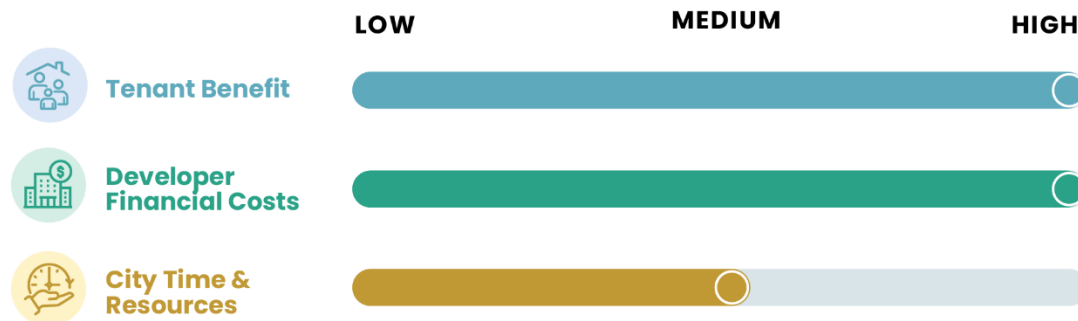


Figure 8: Right of First Refusal with Discounts Implementation Scale



WHAT WE HEARD

Common Sentiment: There was broad recognition that right of first refusal is fair in principle and particularly important in a tight rental market, though concerns were raised about the practicality of implementation given current economic conditions and rising development costs.

Non-Profit Housing Providers and Tenant Advocates: Strongly supportive of right of first refusal with rent discounts, with a preference for allowing tenants to return at their current rent or at a minimum discount of 10 to 25% below CMHC average rents.

Developers and Rental Building Owners: Identified right of first refusal without financial discounts as a feasible requirement, while noting that discounted rents pose a significant barrier to financing and overall project viability. The uncertainty around tenant uptake was also flagged as a particular challenge when securing financing from lenders.

Renters Survey: 95% of renting respondents indicated they wanted right of first refusal to be an available protection measure. However, some respondents questioned its effectiveness if rents are not discounted, noting that market-rate rents in new units would likely remain unaffordable for displaced tenants.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

- **City of Coquitlam** requires right of first refusal with a rent discount of 25% below CMHC average rent.
- **City of Langley** requires applicants to provide right of first refusal with a rent discount of 20% below CMHC average rent or a 15% discount off the strata unit purchase price for tenants returning as purchasers.
- **District of Saanich** requires right of first refusal for a comparable unit in the new or renovated building, matching the existing unit in number of bedrooms and degree of accessibility. The rent must be set at 20% below starting market rent, unless market rent is less than 30% of the household's before-tax income or the tenant's current rent exceeds the proposed discounted rate. Income testing may be used to verify eligibility.
- **City of Kelowna** treats right of first refusal as a voluntary measure at the applicant's discretion. If offered, the rental rate must not exceed 10% above the tenant's current rent. The City also encourages voluntary additional support, such as a rent top-up that bridges the gap between the tenant's current rent and the rent in their new unit for a defined period of time.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Eligible tenants should be offered the right of first refusal to enter into a tenancy agreement for a comparable rental unit in the new building or another unit within the applicant's portfolio.



Comparable units should match the existing unit in number of bedrooms, with any rent discounts left to the discretion of the applicant.¹



Reporting requirements should be considered as a mechanism to confirm that right of first refusal has been offered and to track tenant uptake, with reporting potentially aligned with the occupancy permit stage to support compliance.

1. Rent discounts should be explored in future iterations of the tenant protection bylaw, subject to demonstrated project feasibility. Considerations may include need-based discounts determined through income testing.

Additional Supports

Tenants facing additional housing barriers may experience heightened challenges related to housing security and often require extra support to adequately meet their needs. These tenants are commonly referred to as vulnerable tenants. Defining vulnerability is inherently difficult given its subjective nature, but common criteria include seniors aged 65 or older and/or those on a fixed income, tenants with a recognized mental or physical disability, and low-income tenants.

Additional supports may take the form of unique measures tailored to specific housing barriers, or enhanced versions of existing supports. These may include:

- early and ongoing communication;
- additional compensation for moving expenses;
- additional financial assistance;
- extra time and in-kind support during relocation such as help with packing, arranging and attending viewings, connecting tenants to service or health providers, and assistance obtaining social housing or rent supplements; and
- minor accessibility modifications to the replacement unit, such as installing grab bars, lever-style door handles, or braille and tactile signage. Significant unit modifications, such as new roll-under countertops, would not be included.

To support this approach, the City may develop an intake form to confirm tenant eligibility and determine the appropriate level of additional payments or supports.

Figure 9: Additional Moving Costs and In-Kind Support Implementation Scale

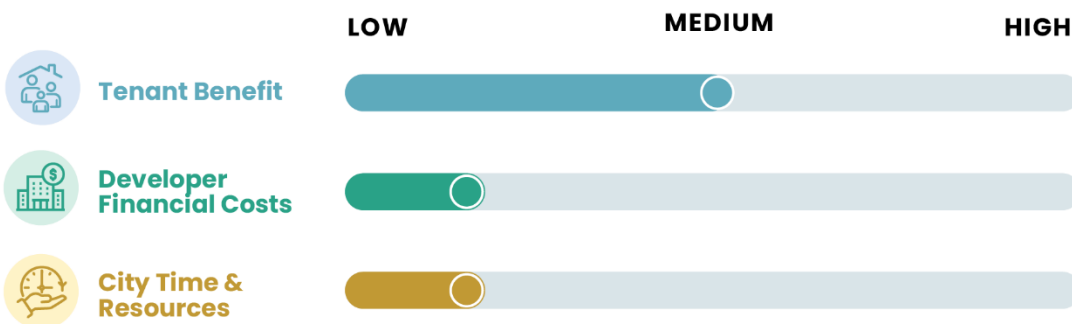
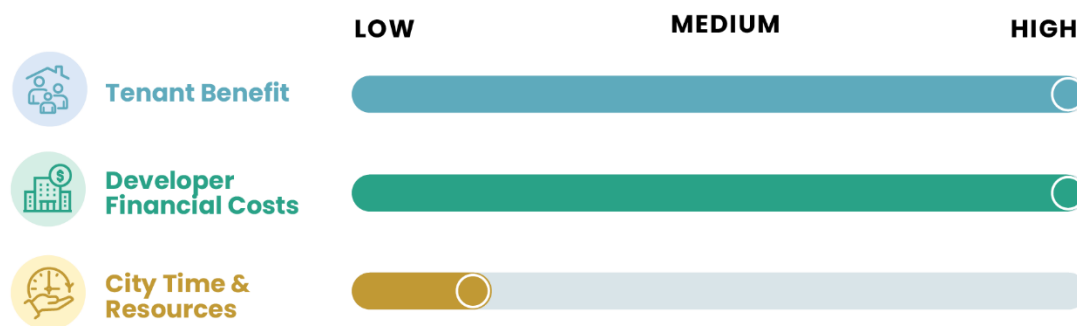


Figure 10: Additional Financial Compensation Implementation Scale



WHAT WE HEARD

Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness: Tenants facing additional housing barriers require clear, plain-language communication delivered directly to them. Enhanced assistance was strongly supported, particularly additional financial compensation and extra moving time or moving support. The City of Toronto's policy was cited as a highly desirable model, which provides additional financial compensation equal to four times the average market rent.

Non-Market Housing Providers and Tenant Advocates: Emphasized the importance of securing affordable and suitable comparable units tailored to individual tenant needs, such as replicated accessibility features and pet-friendly buildings. Concerns were raised about the disproportionate risks faced by tenants with additional housing barriers during displacement, including low-income tenants, single individuals, seniors, newcomers, and those in transitional stages of life. Households with pets, roommates, or subleasing arrangements may also face compounded barriers. Feedback underscored the need for supports that meaningfully reduce the emotional and logistical burden of relocating.

EXAMPLES FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

- **District of Saanich** defines vulnerable tenants as those who may include, but are not limited to, elderly tenants, tenants on low or fixed incomes, and tenants living with a disability. Additional assistance available to these tenants may include connecting with health organizations or non-profit services, help obtaining social housing or rent supplements, additional support with packing or moving, arranging travel to and assistance at apartment viewings, additional or alternative means of communication regarding the relocation process, and language support.
- **City of Langley** defines a vulnerable tenant as one who meets one or more of the following criteria: is a senior aged 55 or older, receives a recognized disability pension or

is considered disabled for income tax purposes, qualifies for deep subsidy or rent-g geared-to-income (RGI) units according to BC Housing eligibility criteria, or is currently paying monthly rent equivalent to or less than the average monthly rent for RGI units in the City.

TRCs are required to provide vulnerable tenants with the following additional relocation assistance: identifying non-market and subsidized unit options, including accessible units; working with non-profit and non-market housing providers to find suitable accommodations; assisting vulnerable tenants in applying for these units and communicating with property managers on their behalf; supporting tenants in visiting and viewing units, including reimbursement of transportation costs separate from any other required compensation, with receipts required for travel reimbursement; assisting with packing, including manual packing assistance by movers working on behalf of the applicant and packing supplies at no additional cost to the tenant up to a value of \$500, in addition to a vulnerable tenant moving assistance amount of \$1,500; and assisting vulnerable tenants in applying for rent supplements as required.

- **City of North Vancouver** considers a household to be low income if its income falls below 50% of the median household income for that household size. Specific thresholds include a gross annual income of less than \$35,000 for households without dependents, and less than \$60,000 for households with dependents. Examples of additional assistance that may be provided to these tenants include early communication and notifications, delivered in person if requested; additional support with arranging and attending viewings; assistance accessing social housing or rent supplements; connections to health organizations and non-profit services; and free support with activities such as packing.
- **City of Toronto** defines tenants with special needs² as 65 years of age or older and/or with existing mental or physical health conditions. Additional assistance includes providing information on demonstrating eligibility through the Notice to Eligible Tenants, as well as a virtual information session held within two weeks of receiving the notice and at the tenant meeting. Eligible tenants also receive additional financial compensation

2. Proposed changes to Toronto's policy include definitional change to 'Tenants Facing Additional Housing Barriers' which includes eligibility by support offered.

equal to four times the average market rent in Toronto, as published in Canada's Rental Market Survey.³

RECOMMENDATIONS + IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Additional Financial Compensation



Provide additional financial compensation equivalent to four months' rent, with consideration given to providing this support through phased payments or rent subsidies rather than a lump-sum payment.



Establish an Additional Assistance Form provided by the City, made available both online and in hard copy. Indicate compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act is the responsibility of the applicant and require signature accordingly.



Consider how tenants will demonstrate eligibility under the vulnerable tenant definition, with acceptable documentation potentially including government-issued identification for age verification, medical forms, and proof of income assistance eligibility.

Additional Moving Costs and In-Kind Supports



Provide additional compensation for moving expenses at a suggested flat rate of \$1,625.



Eligible in-kind moving-related tasks should be established with an upper limit, such as \$500, provided in addition to the vulnerable tenant moving assistance amount.



Eligible tenants should also receive essential accessibility modifications to their comparable unit upon request.⁴



A reporting mechanism for in-kind supports should be considered, such as records of viewings attended, purchased packing supplies, and transportation passes.

3. Proposed changes would replace additional financial compensation with in-kind supports, such as translation services, moving and packing assistance, transportation to viewings or support setting up virtual tours, specialized hoarding services, and accessibility modifications to replacement rental units.

4. The duty to accommodate requires landlords to consider reasonable accommodations in units to avoid discrimination upon tenant request. Landlords are not required to make changes that cause undue hardship. Modifications are intended to support tenants and may include grab bars or ramps. Protection covers tenants with disabilities, families with children, and other characteristics under the *BC Human Rights Code*.

Recommendations for City Consideration

Nanaimo is at an early but important point in building a tenant protection framework that balances the pressures of redevelopment with what is realistic and workable in a local context. While large-scale rental redevelopment is not yet common in the city, recent provincial legislative changes give the City the tools to get ahead of the issue.

The recommended approach is built around three key principles:

- 1** **Clarity + Enforceability:** a consistent regulatory framework that can be applied across eligible redevelopment projects;
- 2** **Proportionality + Feasibility:** requirements that reflect local market conditions without discouraging housing supply; and
- 3** **Flexibility Over Time:** a baseline framework that can be adjusted and strengthened as redevelopment activity and market conditions evolve.

INTEGRATE ENFORCEMENT

Clear enforcement mechanisms should be established, including bylaw notices, municipal ticketing, and *Offence Act* prosecution where warranted. The effectiveness of these measures should be monitored over time and adjusted as needed.

ALIGN TENANT PROTECTIONS WITH EXISTING LEGISLATIVE TOOLS

- Tenant protection measures should be designed to supplement, not replace, provincial protections under the *Residential Tenancy Act*, with compensation requirements structured to avoid duplication.

DEFINE CLEAR ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- The tenant protection bylaw should clearly define eligibility thresholds and applicable housing types. Consistent with Nanaimo's *City Plan*, it is recommended that tenant protections apply to purpose-built rental buildings with four or more units. Expanding protections to secondary rental units and lot consolidations could be considered if development patterns indicate increased risk of tenant displacement in these housing forms.

- Given the diversity of non-market housing providers, a blanket exemption is not recommended. Instead, the City should establish specific flexibilities for non-market operators, **particularly with respect to right of first refusal**, with additional flexibilities available at the City's discretion, such as recognition of existing tenant relocation practices, funding constraints, and provider capacity.

Recommended Tenant Protection Measures

The recommended tenant protection measures are summarized in Table 3 (next page). These measures draw from best practices in other municipalities, community engagement feedback, and Nanaimo's current rental and redevelopment context. Together, they form the core components of a tenant protection bylaw. As local conditions evolve, there may be opportunities to explore additional or enhanced measures. For example, right of first refusal requirements could be strengthened by incorporating rent discounts, or the definition of a comparable unit could be expanded to better support tenants, particularly those facing additional housing barriers.

The recommendations in this report give the City of Nanaimo a clear, flexible, and defensible framework for supporting tenants facing displacement due to redevelopment. The proposed approach balances tenant protection with development feasibility, aligns with provincial legislation and *City Plan* (Official Community Plan) direction, and can be refined over time as Nanaimo's rental and redevelopment context continues to evolve.

Table 3: Tenant Protection Measure Recommendations At-A-Glance

Tenant Protection Measure		Recommendation(s)
Initial Notice	Mandatory Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require a mandatory meeting hosted by the applicant and attended by City staff. Clearly define the roles of each party (the City, applicants, and tenants) and establish meeting protocols to ensure meetings are effective and productive.
	Required Informational Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a standardized informational letter to be provided as part of the initial notice to tenants, outlining all required information. Define mandatory delivery methods for notices, such as hard copy letters sent by mail.
Financial Compensation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide eligible tenants with a minimum of four months' rent in financial compensation (inclusive of one month required under the <i>Residential Tenancy Act</i>), consistency with the RTA's four-month notice of eviction requirement. Base compensation levels on the current rent set out in the tenancy agreement of the CMHC average rent, whichever greater. Allow tenants to choose their preferred method of receiving financial compensation. Consider payment options beyond lump sum or rent-free arrangements, such as exploring a partnership with the non-profits for monthly disbursements. Establish clear timeframes for payment, such as requiring that compensation be paid no later than the termination of tenancy, unless ongoing monthly payments have been arranged.

Tenant Protection Measure		Recommendation(s)
Tenant Relocation	Comparable Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require applicants to provide a minimum of three comparable units within 90 days before end of tenancy. • Define a comparable unit as one that is located within the City of Nanaimo with at least one option situated in the same general area as the existing unit, matches the existing unit in number of bedrooms, and has a maximum rent not exceeding the greater of 10% above the tenant's current rent or the CMHC average rent for units of the same size within the City. • Encourage applicants to provide a selection of comparable units with additional criteria such as proximity to transit, maintain school catchment areas as existing units, or within a pet-friendly building.
	Moving Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants should receive financial compensation for moving costs based on unit size, as follows: \$1,000 for bachelor and one-bedroom units, \$1,250 for two-bedroom units, and \$1,400 for units with three or more bedrooms.
	Tenant Relocation Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require applicants hire an independent third-party tenant relocation coordinator to support tenant relocation in redevelopment projects exceeding 20 units.
Right of First Refusal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer eligible tenants the right of first refusal to enter into a tenancy agreement to rent a comparable rental unit in the new building or another unit in the applicant's portfolio. • Follow criteria for comparable replacement units be the same number of bedrooms as the existing unit, with discounted rents at the discretion of the applicant.

Tenant Protection Measure		Recommendation(s)
Additional Supports	Additional Financial Compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional financial compensation of an additional four months' rent. Consider providing vulnerable tenants with phased payments or rent subsidies instead of lump-sum payments.
	Additional Moving Costs and In-Kind Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional compensation for moving expenses at a suggested flat rate of \$1,625. • Establish eligible in-kind moving related tasks and set an upper limit, such as \$500, in addition to the vulnerable tenant moving assistance amount. • Provide eligible tenants essential accessibility modifications in comparable units if requested.

