

My name is Brook Jensen and I'm a volunteer organizer with the New Westminster Tenants Union. During our March 31st meeting, this year, a majority of attending members voted in favour of organizing around the upcoming local election. What our members wanted was this: to secure commitments from all candidates and parties concerning issues important to them and their neighbours, as well as increasing renter education and participation in the upcoming election.

Since then, these members and others have been reaching out to their neighbours, building connections, and surveying the top housing-related issues in their communities. They also formed a non-partisan research team to boil those issues down into concrete, achievable, and specific questions that can be posed to all candidates. At our August meeting, they voted on what the final FIVE questions would be, and since September 14th, those questions have been sent to every candidate's inboxes.

These questions include whether you will fight the province to follow-through on their election commitment to end discrimination against pets in purpose-built rentals, address gaps in the standard and maintenance by-laws that make it difficult for tenants to get enforcement, advocate against unfair rent increases to the province, and your position on affordable housing development policies.

The candidate's answers will be given to our members **next Tuesday** where they will have the opportunity to evaluate and grade them. But it won't just be those answers. Our volunteer research team has been busy studying party platforms and candidate histories, but more importantly, they have personally watched and documented every city council meeting in the last four years where housing issues or development of any nature was discussed. They documented discussion points, arguments and voting records of anyone running in this next election. The full document will be shared online, and a summary will be presented to our members alongside candidate answers during the grading.

Once graded, the results will be compiled into a simplified **Renters Report Card** which will show the average score our members gave each mayoral candidate and party per question as well as a final score. It will also link to our website online where anyone can read the extensive aforementioned research and candidate answers in full.

As for what will happen with these final printed report cards, (you can see we have some of these members here today). They and others have committed to distributing them in the apartment buildings they live in by going door-to-door, sliding them in mailboxes, or placing them in their lobbies, laundry, and common rooms. As of today, that includes **27** volunteers living across **24** different buildings totalling **1030** units. These numbers are still growing as we connect with new community members and finalize data on those who have already signed up.

Additionally, everyone will be invited to share them in their other communities, online, and help pass them out on the streets of New West leading up to the election.

Parties and candidates have until the end of day **Monday September 28th** to submit their answers (this is an extension from the email as we had to delay our grading due to other commitments). If answers aren't received from a candidate or party, they'll be marked as declined and those parties will be graded exclusively off the research team's presentations.

Our members look forward to getting an email back before the deadline from anyone running again here and working together with the next mayor and council on building a better city.

Thank you.