

2026 New West Election - Renter Power Project

New Westminster Tenants Union

On **October 17th**, an election will decide the next Mayor and City Council in New Westminster. They will be in power for four years. Municipal elections don't get the same coverage or turnout as provincial or federal elections, but city governments actually have an incredible amount of power to shape your life.

For example, in just the last couple years, your fellow renters have organized and won some incredible victories at city hall. These include **a new tenant assistance policy that guarantees any renter displaced by redevelopment a brand new apartment with no rent increase**, a new **cooling by-law** that takes the first steps to make landlords **responsible for cooling apartment buildings**, and back in 2019, a **renoviction ban that basically stopped bad-faith renovation evictions in New Westminster**.

These were not passed just because we had the "correct" politicians in office, but because renters showed up in numbers and fought for them. If you want to continue expanding the rights of renters in this city, on issues as diverse as affordability, maintenance, or pets, it's important politicians realize that renters are **educated, organized**, and politically **active**.

We'll achieve these goals through a mix of research, mobilisation, and education. A **research team** will perform background checks on the candidates, their platforms and their voting record. They will also create a survey of yes or no questions about important issues to send to each candidate. Then the **mobilisation team** will fill City Hall ahead of the election to show we're serious and pressure candidates to answer the survey. Finally, the research team will compile all the information into a comprehensive **renter report card** with facts about every candidate and the **mobilisation team** will distribute these far and wide just ahead of the election.

It's important to know, **The New West Tenants Union is *not* endorsing one party or candidate**. We do not work for politicians. We are renters standing up for ourselves and building independent power together. Politicians can promise the world, but what will matter in the end is not who wins, but what we can make them do.

And it doesn't take much. In the last election, the difference between the winning and losing candidate for city council *was only about 150 votes*. If we mobilise even just 50 renters to City Hall, and each of those renters distributed the report card to 30 units in their building, that represents potentially *1500 influenced votes*.

You have more power than you think.

Flip the page to learn more about the **timeline** for each team and **how you can help**.

Research Team

Goals:

- Perform extensive background research on candidates, their platforms and voting records
- Create a list of Yes or No questions on key issues to be sent to all candidates
- Combine the research, survey answers and fact checking to produce a comprehensive **renter report card** that can be distributed before the election

Timeline:

- Background research complete by end of August
- Questions for candidates formulated by end of August
- Questions sent to candidates by mid-September
- Report card ready for printing at least a week ahead of the election

Ethical Guideline: Non-Partisan → We do not draw our own conclusions. We are looking for facts alone. Try to avoid confirmation bias by only looking for the positives/negatives. Be careful about misinformation and the sources we use/rely on.

How you can help:

- Join the team and take notes on an assigned candidate
- Help decide what questions will appear on the survey
- Help design, organize, and print the report card

Mobilization Team

Goals:

- Mobilize **at least 50 renters** to the **September 21st** city council meeting to remind all candidates to respond to our survey as to what they will commit to if elected
- Have those same renters **distribute the final renter report card within their building** either by placing them in neighbours doors, mailboxes, or in common rooms

Timeline:

- **August 25th @ 6:30pm in New West Library:** Pack our monthly tenants union meeting to test our numbers and prep for the council meeting
- **September 21st @ 6pm at City Hall:** Attend the city council meeting and remind council to fill out survey
- **A few days before the election:** Distribute renter report cards in buildings

How can you help:

- Talk your neighbours, friends, and community members who are renters about attending the September 21st council meeting
- Sign up to distribute report cards in your building or community groups