



Renter's Report Card

Questions for New Westminster Candidate Responses

Question #1

Will you support hiring more staff at City Hall to directly address and remedy tenancy issues including but not limited to the illegal subdivision of units and pest control; and provide accessible education to tenants on tenant rights, how to seek remediation of substandard living conditions, and how to access and navigate city resources?

Community First New West	
Bereket Kebede <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, I believe the City should have enough staff and resources to address unsafe and substandard rental housing, such as illegal subdivisions and pest problems. I also support making tenant rights education accessible in multiple languages, so everyone knows how to report concerns and where to get help. There should be a clear contact person who responds quickly to issues it can address and guides residents to provincial tenancy resources when needed.
Dalia Al-Hussaini <i>Council candidate</i>	Hey Tenants' Union, I wanted to thank you folks for your work and advocacy as the only renter running for Council here in New West, so tenant issues aren't abstract for me. I've had to advocate for myself with landlords and property managers more than once, just to get basic problems fixed and my rights respected. As a single parent, I also know how hard it is to find a safe, affordable home that works for a family in New West. Yes - Rules only protect tenants if someone enforces them, and right now too much of that work falls on tenants themselves. I'd support dedicated staff capacity for illegal subdivisions, pests, and substandard conditions. I'd also support tenant education that is actually accessible: plain language, multiple languages, and delivered through the community organizations people already trust. My background in newcomer settlement taught me that people often don't know their rights, or they're afraid to use them. As an immigrant with privilege, I want to use that in support of these groups. Outreach has to meet them where they are.
Jaimie McEvoy (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes. I believe in Tenants Rights. I believe a rental unit is also a home. And I believe that tenants deserve to live in well maintained buildings.

	The city can play a role in accessible education for tenants, as well as education for landlords, so there are no excuses. There are some who oppose the city playing any role in tenants issues. For the nearly half of residents who are renters, representation and support from their city is fair, and it's important. So my answer is a yes to each of those questions.
Kane Tse <i>Council candidate</i>	I understand the feeling of being trapped that renters feel when an issue is not appropriately addressed in a timely manner and don't know where to turn to for help. Every person deserves to live in a space which is fully compliant with rules and regulations. However, simply adding more staff does not automatically mean that tenancy issues will be addressed faster nor more effectively. We need to ensure that city staff have the resources required to effectively support tenants in our community. I would support a review of the work the city is currently doing to support tenants, and would advocate for collaboration with the Tenant Resource & Advisory Centre and New West Tenants Union in this process.
Patrick Johnstone (incumbent) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Yes, and have already supported this. During the budget discussions in 2025, Council approved the hiring of specific bylaws staff to address these issues. On May 12, 2025 Council approved not just new regulations to protect tenants during heat domes, but recognizing that other tenant-related issues such as illegal subdivision of units and other complaints required more action from the City, we approved the following motion: <i>"That an operating budget enhancement for three regular full-time positions to support tenant related enforcement, support and life-safety work be included for consideration as part of the 2026 Budget process"</i> I voted for this as did my Community First colleagues, and it passed. Daniel Fontaine and his New West Progressive colleague voted against it. As this was referred to the budget process, I also voted for it when that budget came before us, and once again Councillor Fontaine voted against the budget required to fund this.
Peter Jorgensen <i>Council candidate</i>	I'm sorry this has to be asked. And YES - I would support these calls to action. Every tenant deserves to live in a well maintained home with a responsive and responsible landlord. If you don't want to serve your tenants then you shouldn't even be a landlord. The City should have the backs of tenants when they are facing unfortunate situations like these - and I do believe a little education would go a long way.
Tasha Henderson (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	During my term on Council, I have already supported the hiring of two new staff positions to better support tenants. With those positions recently filled, I'm keen to evaluate the impact after an appropriate amount of time has passed and assess what gaps are needed to ensure that tenants have access to support and to ensure that bylaw infractions and maintenance complaints are investigated in a timely way. Given nearly half the residents in New West rent their homes it is time we look at creating a formal Tenants Office with dedicated staff, including the two new staff positions we created last year.

Independent	
Geoff Homel <i>Council candidate</i>	Oh man, this is a tough question for me. I don't know if you'll like my answer! Live people at City Hall are <i>incredibly</i> expensive, and staff would likely end up hiring additional external consultants to try and figure out how to make this work. I wish that I could say that municipal governments are known for their efficiency, but, in my opinion, it would honestly be far more cost effective to provide additional online or library-based educational materials. I'd certainly support an internal review to ensure existing staff are trained and prepared in this regard! I'm not an incumbent, and I'd actually be really interested to know if tenants feel served by the existing systems the city has in place; if things are really dire, I suppose extra staff really would be appropriate. I'm sure you folks already know this, but it is important add that illegal subdivision and pest control issues would under the purview of the provincial government!
New Westminster Progressives	
Daniel Fontaine (incumbent) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Daniel Fontaine did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Karima Budhwani <i>Council candidate</i>	Karima Budhwani did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Ken Armstrong <i>Council candidate</i>	Ken Armstrong did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Maryann Morrison <i>Council candidate</i>	Maryann Morrison did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Paul Minhas (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	Paul Minhas did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Ray Porcellato <i>Council candidate</i>	Ray Porcellato did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Rick Folka <i>Council candidate</i>	Rick Folka did not respond to our communication and follow-up.

Question #2

Will you work with fellow council members and the NWTU to advocate at the Union of BC Municipalities for the province to repeal Additional Rent Increases for Capital Expenditures ([residential tenancy regulation section 23.1](#))?

Community First New West	
Bereket Kebede <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, I would work with other Council members, the NWTU, and other municipalities through UBCM and push for changes to Additional Rent Increases for Capital Expenditures. Rental buildings need proper upkeep, but major repairs are part of owning property. We need provincial policies that protect tenants from major, unexpected rent hikes while ensuring

	rental housing stays safe, well-maintained, affordable, and sustainable long term.
Dalia Al-Hussaini <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes. Maintaining a building is part of the cost of being a landlord, who is already financially sufficient. Tenants shouldn't pay extra for repairs on top of their rent, especially in older rental stock where deferred maintenance is common. These increases also add pressure on exactly the tenants New West is trying to keep housed- including seniors, persons with disabilities and low-income groups. I'd work with council colleagues and the NWTU to bring this forward at UBCM.
Jaimie McEvoy (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes to repealing section 23.1. And also, to advocate for other pro-tenant initiatives: real rent control, allowing pets, improving staffing at the residential tenancy branch, making it easier to pursue issues there, and more widespread and better education for tenants on their rights.
Kane Tse <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, working in cooperation with other municipalities to advocate the provincial government is a critically important responsibility for councillors. While the continued upkeep and repair of rental buildings is crucially important; the current Additional Rent Increases for Capital Expenditures policy puts tenants at risk of unexpected rent hikes. We need provincial policies that better protect tenants without deterring owners from making improvements to their rental properties.
Patrick Johnstone (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Yes. We have an older building stock in New Westminster, and to adapt them to the new reality of climate change will require investment from government. The cost of maintaining a livable space cannot be downloaded onto the most vulnerable in the community, but instead Climate Action funds from all levels of government should be allocated towards these upgrades. We can work with landlords and stratas to develop PACE funding or other models of financing to assure residential spaces are safe and livable without downloading those costs.
Peter Jorgensen <i>Council candidate</i>	Major repairs and keeping a rental unit up to code are the responsibility of the landlord and the costs of those improvements shouldn't result in any kind of additional rental increase to the tenant. So, yes, I would work with, and advocate for the NWTU on repealing this.
Tasha Henderson (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Council candidate</i>	I would be happy to work with the NWTU to champion their advocacy at the Union of BC Municipalities. When we approved the Maximum Heat Bylaw last year, we wrote to the Minister of Housing for clarity that any capital improvements related to bylaw adherence wouldn't be able to trigger renovations or increased rent amounts. Unfortunately, we did not hear back. This is an issue that's top of mind for me, as we work to ensure that rental units remain liveable and relatively affordable for tenants.
Independent	
Geoff Homel <i>Council candidate</i>	Absolutely. A rental isn't a strata, and renters shouldn't be on the hook for basic repairs and upgrades to a home or unit.
New Westminster Progressives	
Daniel Fontaine (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Daniel Fontaine did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Karima Budhwani	Karima Budhwani did not respond to our communication and follow-up.

<i>Council candidate</i>	
Ken Armstrong <i>Council candidate</i>	Ken Armstrong did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Maryann Morrison <i>Council candidate</i>	Maryann Morrison did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Paul Minhas (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	Paul Minhas did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
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Rick Folka <i>Council candidate</i>	Rick Folka did not respond to our communication and follow-up.

Question #3

Will you support building more [affordable housing](#) and [below-market housing](#) in New Westminster, using all the tools available at the municipal level to do so?

Community First New West	
Bereket Kebede <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, I support increasing affordable and below-market housing. I will work to use City-owned land for housing partnerships, require affordable units when possible, protect existing rental homes, and speed up approval for non-profit and affordable housing projects. I also want to build more housing near transit and will seek provincial and federal funding to make the most of every municipal dollar. I will push for clear annual targets and public reporting so residents know how many affordable homes are approved, built, and protected.
Dalia Al-Hussaini <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes. Affordability is at the centre of our platform. I'd use every municipal tool available: prioritizing city-owned land for non-market housing, faster approvals for non-profit and co-op projects, inclusionary requirements, density bonusing, and strong partnerships with BC Housing and community housing providers. New West has a proud history as a renters' city, and I want to protect that while adding the homes we need. I would also look at ways to establish emergency funds for renters and prioritize relocation within New Westminster in the case of shocks like the Pinecrest Manor fire.
Jaimie McEvoy (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	I'm proud to have supported affordable housing and below market housing for the past five terms of office that I have served. When I was first elected, there had not been a new rental building built in the city, I believe since the 1970s. And there are other important aspects to that work. Like making sure the definition of affordable housing has real meaning. And ensuring that at least some of that affordable housing is deeply affordable, for those who are on social assistance or other limited income. Those initiatives that I have supported have a wide range, from supporting social housing being built on city land, to newly built rental, to including inclusionary zoning and affordable housing as part of larger developments.

	Our Community First city council majority, and myself as councillor McEvoy, well, we really do put community first, and everyone is part of our community. When I see councillors oppose affordable housing in a development, I see a real need to get out and vote, to ensure that we keep going forward, not backward. Among the tools available, there is none greater than the willingness to say yes. As a Councillor, I have always said yes to affordable and below market housing.
Kane Tse <i>Council candidate</i>	I maintain that housing is a spectrum, and we need all types, from the supportive housing to below-market and market rentals to 3-bedroom apartments and homes for families and seniors to age in-place. New Westminster is limited in terms of land area, so our options to expand affordable housing options will require us to increase density. As with all development, it is crucial that our civic infrastructure, including schools, parks, utilities and roads, keeps pace with increased density. We need to explore all possible options, including using city-owned land and partnerships with non-profit organizations and other levels of government. It is also important that the city continue to work to simplify the development process for affordable housing projects to ensure that we are able to deliver more affordable housing, faster.
Patrick Johnstone (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Yes. We have already moved many levers to accelerate the approval and building of non-market housing and supportive housing in the City, including pre-zoning all Transit Oriented Development areas mandated by the province for non-market (government or non-profit) housing up to six stories. We also provide capital grants to help with permitting and servicing costs for non-market affordable housing. We have three projects under construction right now in the City, but our Housing Needs Report indicates a dozen more needed to meet current demand, and we continue to advocate to senior governments to fund this most fundamental infrastructure need. In contrast, my opponent has taken every opportunity to vote against affordable housing. He voted against the Aunt Leah's project on Marine Drive, against emergency weather shelter for unhoused people, against market developments that include affordable housing as an amenity. He voted against the City leveraging its own land for affordable housing, and is now rallying opposition to transitional housing in new Westminster. He will tell you he supports affordable housing - his voting record tells a very different story.
Peter Jorgensen <i>Council candidate</i>	Absolutely! I am a big proponent of creating our own municipal housing authority here in New West to provide more below-market, near-market, and work force housing for the community.
Tasha Henderson (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes. I have supported every single affordable housing and below-market housing project that has come to Council during my term and am delighted that we secured 13 units for seniors Uptown, and that the construction of 89 affordable units in the West End and 52 units Downtown are both well

	underway. New Westminster has taken important strides to ensure that we are streamlining the development process as much as possible for affordable housing projects, both by pre-zoning all properties for this use and by prioritizing any applications in the Planning Department. At the September 21 Council meeting, we approved our participation in a Federal initiative called “From the Ground”, to leverage Federal funding in New Westminster for future affordable non-market housing or housing with supports. The majority on Council is doing whatever it can to ensure that we are poised and ready for any collaborative opportunities to build more affordable housing. Our Affordable Housing Reserve Fund is an important tool to reduce the cost burden for new affordable developments and recently we moved to look at whether we can also access that Fund for the upkeep and maintenance of current affordable housing projects that might be nearing end-of-life. I look forward to better understanding how we might be able to leverage that fund to ensure we don’t lose any current units while we look ahead to the development of new projects.
Independent	
Geoff Homel <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes. As far as I am concerned, new developments should generally be required to provide a certain number of units at affordable or below-market costs. It should generally be part of the conditions for issuing building permits.
New Westminster Progressives	
Daniel Fontaine (incumbent) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Daniel Fontaine did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
Karima Budhwani <i>Council candidate</i>	Karima Budhwani did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
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Question #4

Will you advocate at the Union of BC Municipalities for the provincial government to pass legislation prohibiting landlords from forbidding pets in their rental properties?

Community First New West	
Bereket Kebede <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, I would support UBCM advocacy for provincial legislation that addresses blanket “no pets” policies in rental housing. Pets are important

	companions, and renters should not face unnecessary barriers when seeking housing. However, such legislation must balance tenants' interests with pet rules by establishing reasonable pet policies, clarifying responsibility for damages, and ensuring protections related to noise, safety, and health. The objective should be to increase pet-friendly housing options while safeguarding landlords' and other residents' interests.
Dalia Al-Hussaini <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes. I understand how important pets are for mental health and wellbeing, and would advocate for this kind of support at UBCM. I would have to further explore what the barriers to this are.
Jaimie McEvoy (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	Our council actually submitted a resolution on this matter to a previous UBCM. I spoke passionately in favour of pets, and was interviewed by media. I'm well known as an anti-poverty advocate, an affordable housing advocate. I'm also an animal rights advocate. I campaigned previously on creating a new animal shelter in the city, and that new shelter was created. After Covid, I think it's even more evident. People need and benefit from companionship in their home. I've known of people who had to give up pets when moving, and having trouble finding a new place that allows pets. Join my facebook at Jaimie McEvoy. You'll see plenty of pictures of my cats, and fish and frogs! I fully intend to reintroduce and advocate for the right of people to have a pet in rental properties.
Kane Tse <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, I support advocating at UBCM for passing this legislation. Ultimately pets are part of people's families and renters should not be forced into making a difficult decision between housing and their family member. In an already difficult rental market, no-pet clauses can be a significant barrier to those looking for affordable housing. However, it is important that this change be accompanied by a consideration of reasonable pet policies, including issues around damages and concerns around health and safety.
Patrick Johnstone (incumbent) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Yes, however, I do not think UBCM will be the most effective avenue for this advocacy. Resolutions to this effect have been put forward by UBCM members in the past, more recently in 2020 (NR74 – which was not discussed as we ran out of resolution time prior to its consideration) and 2025 (NR39 – which was NOT endorsed by the membership, for the record I voted for it, but we were defeated). It is unlikely UBCM will consider this resolution again in the next few years, and I suggest direct advocacy to the province with support of animal protection groups might be more effective in consideration of that.
Peter Jorgensen <i>Council candidate</i>	As long as the tenant has adequate pet insurance to cover any damage done to the property due to the pet, and is fully liable for any damage caused by their pet - there shouldn't be any reason to forbid a pet. Pets provide a great deal of comfort to a lot of people - especially folks who live on their own - and it's incredibly hard to find rental units that allow them.

	Responsible pet owners shouldn't face any additional barriers to finding a home.
Tasha Henderson (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Council candidate</i>	The City of Port Moody has brought forward resolutions to the Lower Mainland Local Government Association on this issue and I have vocally supported those resolutions at the annual conference. Unfortunately, they were not passed by my peers around the region in order to make it to the Union of BC Municipalities Convention. It is well-documented that pets can provide crucial companionship for many people and that the inability to find a unit that accepts pets can lead to homelessness or lead people to stay in their current unit which may not be liveable for other reasons. I will continue to advocate for this, working with community-based organizations like the BC SPCA, the NWTU, and other supportive municipalities and Council colleagues.
Independent	
Geoff Homel <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes.
New Westminster Progressives	
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Karima Budhwani <i>Council candidate</i>	Karima Budhwani did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
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Rick Folka <i>Council candidate</i>	Rick Folka did not respond to our communication and follow-up.

Question #5

Will support improving the city's [Business Regulations and Licensing Bylaw No.6926](#) concerning standards of maintenance in rental units based on tenant feedback on common, unaddressed issues?

Community First New West	
Bereket Kebede <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, I will support the review and enhancement of the City's Business Regulations and Licensing (Rental Units) Bylaw No. 6926, incorporating tenant feedback to identify persistent, unaddressed maintenance issues. I believe this process will help us address prevalent concerns such as pest infestations, plumbing and water leaks, heating and cooling systems, ventilation, elevator functionality and more. I will advocate for clearer maintenance standards, reasonable timelines for landlords to address deficiencies, and an easier reporting system for tenants. The objective is to

	ensure renters in New Westminster live in safe, healthy, well-maintained homes while also establishing clear, practical expectations for property owners.
Dalia Al-Hussaini <i>Council candidate</i>	YES. Tenants know better than anyone where the bylaw falls short. I'd support a regular process for gathering tenant feedback on common, unaddressed issues, working with the NWTU and tenants directly, and using it to update the standards and strengthen enforcement. As an evaluator, I believe policy should be tested against people's lived experience and improved when it isn't working.
Jaimie McEvoy (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	Yes, I think it's time for a review of the city's standards of maintenance enforcement, with an eye to ensuring its comprehensiveness and effectiveness. The best way to do that is by fully including the New West Tenants Union and renters from the start, hearing the real life experiences of people, what does work, and what needs to be improved. The city also needs to advocate with the province and BC Housing, to make funding available to upgrade maintenance for older buildings. I think that advocacy role will be increasingly important, given that some of the not for profit housing in the city is reaching advanced age. All of the questions, including this one, are impacted by a willingness by the city to make sure that we dedicate the resources, hire the staff, and include initiatives in the city budget. Myself, Jaimie McEvoy, and Community First, when it comes to affordable housing, and renters, we don't just talk the talk, we fund the budget! Thank you, please vote, and good luck to all of us.
Kane Tse <i>Council candidate</i>	It is important that bylaws are reviewed to ensure that they continue to serve our community. As part of a larger review of the work the city does to support tenants, I would support engagement with the New West Tenants Union to understand where deficiencies may exist in the current bylaw.
Patrick Johnstone (incumbent) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	As these changes to the Bylaw to extend into tenant protections is new, I will support periodic review of them, and think the NWTU voice in those discussions would be valuable. I note that the City walks a very fine line on its use of Business Licensing to enforce tenancy rights, as there is legal precedence for <i>ultra vires</i> arguments that our Bylaw cannot overlap with Provincial regulations such as the Building Code or Residential Tenancy Act. As our primary goal is the protection of tenancy rights and the life safety and security of renters, we must always be mindful that we only regulate where those regulations fall short, and do not attempt to regulate where the province or other powers fall short on <i>enforcement</i> of regulations that exist.
Peter Jorgensen <i>Council candidate</i>	I believe that bylaws concerning standards of maintenance in rental units should always be revisited and refined when new information, concerns, and unaddressed issues are made known.
Tasha Henderson (incumbent) <i>Council candidate</i>	It is always important for the City to revisit bylaws to ensure that they are meeting the current needs of residents and the broader context. I would

	love to gain a better understanding of where the Bylaws are falling short and what work is needed to address gaps that impact tenants.
Independent	
Geoff Homel <i>Council candidate</i>	With some caution, yes. I would like to know what these common, unaddressed issues are, as the bylaw is pretty thorough! But generally, it seems like something I'd support.
New Westminster Progressives	
Daniel Fontaine (<i>incumbent</i>) <i>Mayoral candidate</i>	Daniel Fontaine did not respond to our communication and follow-up.
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