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# **HOMES FOR B.C.**

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**A 30-POINT PLAN FOR HOUSING  
AFFORDABILITY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

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*HOMES FOR B.C.: A 30-POINT PLAN FOR  
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IN BRITISH COLUMBIA  
FEBRUARY, 2018*

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# FOREWORD BY THE HONOURABLE SELINA ROBINSON MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING

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*Safe, affordable housing is critical to affordability and our overall quality of life, yet it has become the single-biggest challenge affecting British Columbians today.*



Prices for renting and buying have surged past local incomes, leaving people paying a greater portion of their wages towards their home. This is hurting people, businesses and communities.

Since becoming housing minister I have met with hundreds of leaders from every level of government, Indigenous Peoples, and the public, non-profit and private sectors. All were excited to be part of the solution to British Columbia's housing affordability crisis.

The lack of affordable homes is hurting people and holding our province back.

Home prices didn't spike overnight, and our housing problems can't be fixed with a single budget.

It will take years of sustained action to bring housing affordability home.

We are acting immediately to stabilize demand by introducing a new speculation tax, increasing and expanding the foreign buyers tax and closing legal loopholes abused by speculators.

And we're working hard to build the right supply. We're making the biggest investment in housing in our province's history. Thousands of affordable homes are in development today, with tens of thousands more to come.

Together, in partnership with all levels of government, Indigenous Peoples, non-profits, co-ops, and the private sector we will streamline the creation of the homes people need across British Columbia.

We will continue to make housing more secure with sensible changes to our housing laws that make life more fair for renters and landlords, and by helping seniors and low-income families in need keep up with skyrocketing rents.

Taken together, these actions represent the first step on the path to reaching our goal of a province where everyone has the secure, safe, and affordable home they need.

Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing





**GOVERNMENT'S  
30-POINT PLAN  
FOR A FAIRER  
HOUSING MARKET**

# GOVERNMENT'S 30-POINT PLAN FOR A FAIRER HOUSING MARKET

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## STABILIZING THE MARKET:

1. Taxing speculators who are driving up housing costs
2. Increasing the foreign buyers tax rate to 20%
3. Expanding the foreign buyers tax to areas outside of Metro Vancouver
4. Increasing the property transfer tax on the value of homes over \$3 million
5. Increasing the school tax rate on the value of homes over \$3 million
6. Allowing online accommodation providers to apply PST and MRDT on short-term rentals
7. Reviewing the Homeowner Grant to provide fairness for renters

## CRACKING DOWN ON TAX FRAUD AND CLOSING LOOPHOLES:

8. Moving to stop tax evasion in pre-sale condo reassignments
9. Taking action to end hidden ownership, including a new beneficial ownership registry
10. Strengthening provincial auditing and enforcement powers
11. Moving to close property tax loopholes on the ALR
12. Expanding information collection and information sharing with the federal government to prevent tax evasion
13. Seeking permanent provincial-federal action to combat money laundering, tax evasion, and avoidance





## **BUILDING THE HOMES PEOPLE NEED:**

- 14.** Making a \$6 billion-plus investment in affordable housing.
- 15.** Building rental units for the missing middle – more than 14,000 units for individuals, working families and seniors
- 16.** Housing for women and children affected by violence
- 17.** Working with universities, institutes and colleges to build new student housing
- 18.** Fixing existing projects with an eye to ensuring affordability for British Columbians
- 19.** Partnering with Indigenous communities to invest \$548 million over 10 years in social housing
- 20.** Building 2,500 new supportive homes for people struggling with homelessness

## **SECURITY FOR RENTERS:**

- 21.** Expanding and increasing benefits to seniors living independently
- 22.** Expanding and increasing the Rental Assistance Program to help working parents.
- 23.** Strengthening protections for renters and manufactured home owners.
- 24.** Extending the life, quality and affordability of existing affordable housing



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- 25.** HousingHub: Building Partnerships. Building Homes.
- 26.** Empowering local governments
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- 30.** Expanding transit and building communities





# **STABILIZING THE MARKET**



## STABILIZING THE MARKET

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*Stabilizing B.C.'s out-of-control real estate market is essential to addressing the housing crisis.*

*That's why our strategy includes a number of measures aimed at curbing demand, reducing tax evasion, closing real estate market loopholes and cracking down on speculators who don't contribute to our province and our communities.*

### 1. TAXING SPECULATORS WHO ARE DRIVING UP HOUSING COSTS

People, including many non-resident investors, are speculating in B.C.'s housing market, using our housing stock as an investment vehicle that drives up prices and removes rental stock.

We are taking immediate action to crack down on speculators who distort our market.

Beginning fall 2018, the Province will introduce a new speculation tax on residential property. This tax will target foreign and domestic speculators who own residential property in B.C., but don't pay taxes here, including those who leave their units sitting vacant. This will include satellite families.

We are applying this new speculation tax broadly to ensure we don't simply push speculators into neighbouring markets. The new tax will apply

to Metro Vancouver, Fraser Valley, Capital and Nanaimo Regional Districts, and in the municipalities of Kelowna and West Kelowna.

Up-front exemptions will be available for most principal residences, qualifying long-term rental properties and special cases. The Province will also introduce a non-refundable income tax credit which will allow those who pay income tax in B.C. to offset the property tax.

This bold new tax will help return the real estate market to one that serves local residents, rather than speculators.

### 2. INCREASING THE FOREIGN BUYERS TAX

Affordability for B.C. residents comes first.

The speculation in our housing market cannot be allowed to overrule the needs of British Columbians. The 15% foreign buyers tax alone has been insufficient to stabilize the housing market; foreign demand is still putting pressure on our housing stock.

That's why we are increasing the foreign buyers tax (additional property transfer tax) rate from 15% to 20%. Increasing the tax will help deter those speculating in B.C.'s housing market, and penalize those who do. Property owners who enjoy our services should pay their fair share of taxes. Foreign buyers should contribute to our society in return for the high quality of life they enjoy when they move to B.C.

### **3. EXPANDING THE FOREIGN BUYERS TAX TO MORE AREAS**

Our government is also extending the reach and impact of the foreign buyers tax to the Capital Regional District, the Fraser Valley, the Central Okanagan and the Nanaimo Regional District. Extending it to other communities ensures that speculation isn't pushed into neighbouring markets.

The increase and expansion of this tax will help stabilize housing prices and raise revenues to help fund housing affordability measures in our province.

### **4. INCREASING THE PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX ON THE VALUE OF HOMES OVER \$3 MILLION**

Speculation has led to distortions in our housing market, raising prices and turning homes into commodities. These rising housing prices have benefited many people. Those who have benefited the most from the rising real estate market should contribute their fair share.

That's why our government is raising taxes on the province's most expensive homes. The first step is to increase the property transfer tax to 5% from 3% on the fair market value that is over \$3 million on residential properties.

### **5. INCREASING THE SCHOOL TAX RATE ON HOMES OVER \$3 MILLION**

Starting in 2019, the Province will be increasing the school tax on homes assessed over \$3 million – here, too, the increased tax will apply only to the value in excess of \$3 million.





This is what a progressive tax system looks like. These last two measures will not only ask the wealthiest to contribute a little bit more, but they will help to stabilize housing prices. Our tax system should work for all British Columbians, not just those at the top. Our goal is fairness for the people that live, work and pay taxes here. The revenues from these taxes will help address housing affordability in our communities.

## **6. ALLOWING ONLINE ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS TO APPLY PST AND MRDT ON SHORT-TERM RENTALS**

Home-sharing has grown alongside our traditional accommodation industry. But through global offices and online transactions, these companies have taken root outside of our traditional tax system. It is time to make sure they are properly integrated in our tax system.

Our government is taking bold action to make sure new business models in the sharing economy are operating fairly.

The Province is working to make sure that legitimate home-sharing is appropriately taxed. That's why the Province and Airbnb agreed to move forward with legislative changes to allow Airbnb to collect the 8% provincial sales tax (PST) and the up to 3% municipal and regional district tax (MRDT) on all its accommodation provided in B.C. through its platform on behalf of its hosts. This is the first arrangement of its kind in B.C.

Our goal is to ensure tax fairness. This sets online accommodation providers on an even footing with other short-term rental providers across B.C. The Province will be looking to move forward with similar arrangements with other accommodation platforms in the near future.

This action supports municipalities. Local governments have the authority to regulate short-term rentals. These include setting occupancy limits, requiring



business licenses, setting zoning requirements and setting bylaws around noise and nuisances. Applying the PST and MRDT to accommodation purchased on online platforms is one way the province can make sure businesses are operating fairly in our communities.

Applying these taxes to Airbnb supports housing affordability. These additional revenues will help the Province and local governments ease housing affordability. Local governments will also have access to the additional MRDT revenues.

The sharing economy is part of our economy. This is our first step to ensure these businesses are part of our tax system and ensure fairness.

## **7. REVIEWING THE HOMEOWNER GRANT TO PROVIDE FAIRNESS FOR RENTERS**

Currently, through the Homeowner Grant, the Province offers support for most homeowners. But there is no similar support for renters.

The Province will review the Homeowner Grant program to ensure both renters and homeowners benefit in a similar way.



**CRACKING DOWN  
ON TAX FRAUD AND  
CLOSING LOOPHOLES**



## CRACKING DOWN ON TAX FRAUD AND CLOSING LOOPHOLES

*Fraud and corruption in real estate are distorting housing prices in B.C. For too long people have been skirting the tax system when investing in real estate, such as claiming more than one home as a principal residence or applying for the Homeowner Grant without living in B.C.*

The Province is taking immediate action to reduce tax fraud and close loopholes. Strengthening tax administrators' audit and enforcement powers will help to close information gaps and ensure tax compliance.

### 8. MOVING TO STOP TAX EVASION IN PRE-SALE CONDO REASSIGNMENTS

For too long, people have been using loopholes to obscure the true nature of ownership in B.C.'s housing market. One loophole is in contract assignments in the condo pre-sale market. Through the selling and re-selling of contract assignments a condo unit can be sold multiple times before the unit is even lived in, with each of those buyers usually inflating the price and not necessarily paying the appropriate tax.

This is unfair to British Columbians trying to buy into the condo market. The people flipping these pre-sale condos should pay their fair share of taxes.

That's why we are building a database on pre-sale condominium assignments. We will require developers to collect and report comprehensive information about the assignment of pre-sale condo purchases. The information will be reported to a designated provincial office. This information will be shared with federal and provincial tax authorities so they can make sure taxes are paid.

Collecting this information will also allow government to develop new taxation models in the future.



## 9. TAKING ACTION TO END HIDDEN OWNERSHIP

Currently in B.C., true ownership of real estate can be hidden. This means numbered companies, offshore and domestic trusts, and stand-in owners obscure the source of funds in the real estate market. For example, lack of transparency in the land registry means it is not clear who owns nearly half of Vancouver's most expensive properties. This is wrong.

The Province is taking action to close these loopholes and give us a clearer picture of real estate ownership in B.C. It will also help us to crack down on speculators, tax frauds and those engaged in money laundering.

We are taking action in a number of ways to build complete information about beneficial ownership of land and corporations in B.C.

First, the Province will require additional information about beneficial ownership on the Property Transfer Tax form.

Second, we are establishing a registry that will contain information about beneficial ownership of land in B.C., administered by the Land Title Survey Authority. This information will be publicly available and will be shared with federal and provincial tax and law enforcement authorities to assist them in their investigations.



Third, the Province also intends to introduce legislative amendments to require corporations in B.C. hold accurate and up to date information on beneficial owners in their own records offices that will be available to law enforcement, tax and other authorities.

Having a registry means we'll know who owns what. This will help ensure that federal and provincial regulatory, tax and law enforcement agencies have the information they need. By requiring corporations to hold detailed records we'll also be able to track how real estate changes hands.

Together, these actions will help the Province close loopholes in B.C.'s real estate market, and give us a clearer picture of who owns residential property in B.C. The information we collect about beneficial ownership will also allow for the development of new taxation models in the future.

## 10. STRENGTHENING PROVINCIAL AUDITING AND ENFORCEMENT POWERS

The Province will amend the Property Transfer Tax Act to:

- » increase the limitation period for assessments to six years
- » enable the collection of additional buyer information
- » introduce administrative penalties for non-compliance
- » extend the application of the general anti-avoidance rule
- » enable tax administrators to compel access to information relevant to transfers such as information held in a Multiple Listing Service (MLS) database

These amendments will help government verify the information people provide on their property transfer tax form.

The government will also amend the Income Tax Act and the Land Tax Deferral Act to allow improved information sharing to help better identify when people are abusing the property tax deferral program or double-claiming principal residences. These amendments will help improve tax compliance and enforcement.

### **11. MOVING TO CLOSE PROPERTY TAX LOOPHOLES ON THE ALR**

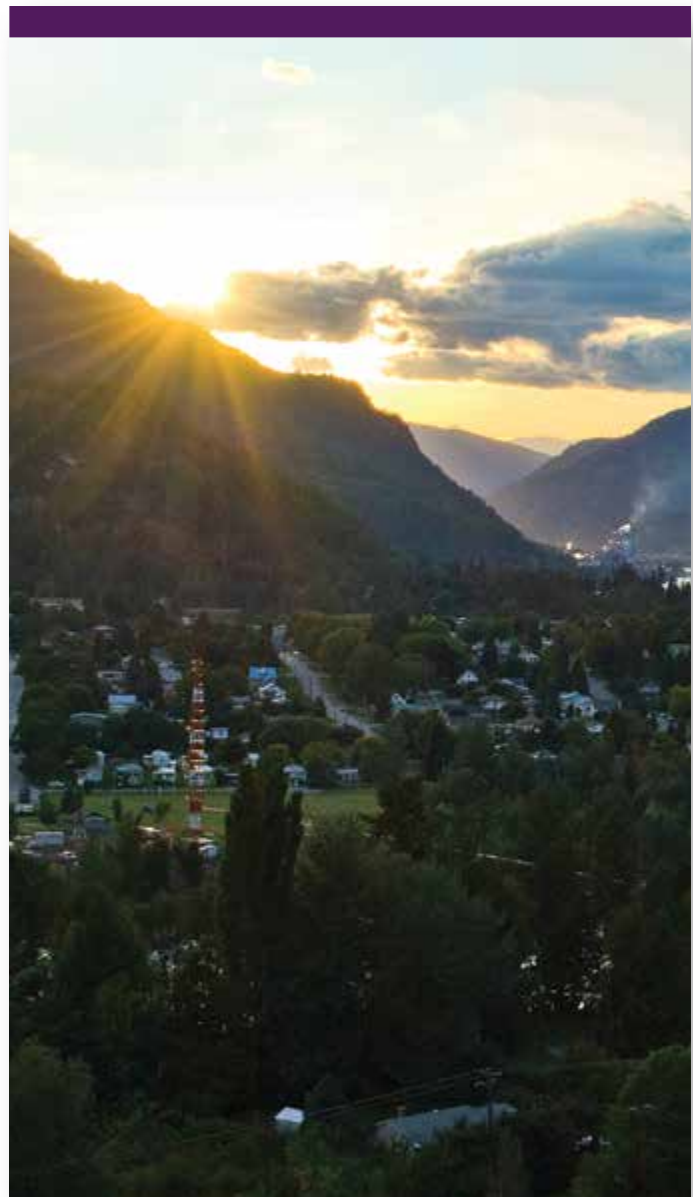
Land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) should be used for farming, not for investors or mega-mansions. The Province will move to change the property tax treatment of residential property in the ALR as part of a broader review to ensure ALR land is being used for farming.

### **12. WORKING WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT TAX EVASION**

Starting in 2019 the Province will collect Social Insurance Numbers as part of the Homeowner Grant application process. This will allow information collected through the Homeowner Grant program to be easily cross referenced with income tax information to catch people inappropriately claiming the grant. This also adds rigour to B.C.'s Homeowner Grant administration to help fight tax evasion, reduce fraud, and ensure people are paying the right amount of tax.

### **13. PERMANENT PROVINCIAL/ FEDERAL ACTION TO COMBAT MONEY LAUNDERING, TAX EVASION AND AVOIDANCE**

The Province has also asked the federal government to formalize a multi-agency working group on tax evasion, money-laundering and housing. Having a dedicated working group would help ensure high priority compliance and enforcement issues in B.C.'s real estate sector are actively addressed. It will also ensure that the B.C. government has the information it needs



to continue to collect and provide data sets required by federal enforcement agencies.

Together these actions will help reduce tax fraud and combat money laundering in B.C.'s real estate market. These are the first steps in making sure the Province and its partners have the information we need to better enforce real estate taxation. British Columbians deserve more effective tax fraud enforcement in our real estate sector.



**BUILDING  
THE HOMES  
PEOPLE NEED**



## **BUILDING THE HOMES PEOPLE NEED**

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*The right supply of homes is key to addressing housing affordability in British Columbia. After years of prices spiraling out of control and declining availability of the kinds of homes people need, it is clear the market alone is not able to deliver safe, affordable, functional homes for British Columbians.*

We are making the biggest investment in housing affordability in B.C. history. This will help build homes for people, create local jobs and open up economic development in communities.

We're investing more than \$6.6 billion over 10 years in homes and housing supports that people need, in every corner of the province – urban, suburban and rural.

### **14. MAKING A \$6.6 BILLION OVER 10 YEARS INVESTMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Through partnerships, government will deliver 114,000 affordable homes over the next 10 years via an historic investment of \$6.6 billion over 10 years in the province's future. This housing will fill current gaps in the market, including homes for growing families, homes for seniors, housing options for women and children fleeing violence, and homes for students.

We are working with all levels of government, Indigenous Peoples, non-profits, and the private sector to streamline the creation of new affordable homes in

every region of the province. It can't be done overnight but with sustained action, proactive partnering and smart streamlining; government can provide critical leadership on the supply-side.

### **15. BUILDING MORE THAN 14,000 RENTAL UNITS FOR THE MISSING MIDDLE**

Many middle income people and families in B.C. are struggling to find housing.

Skilled workers – the teachers, service-industry workers, nurses, and carpenters our communities need – are finding it difficult to find and afford quality housing. This hurts people, it hurts businesses and it hurts our economy.

B.C. Chamber of Commerce members overwhelmingly agree that housing costs are a major issue for businesses across the province, with 9 out of 10 business owners agreeing home prices are discouraging workers from living in our communities.



*ABOVE: ROSALIE'S VILLAGE PROVIDES AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND DAYCARE FOR SINGLE MOTHERS FLEEING VIOLENCE.*

Recognizing historically low vacancy rates and historically high home prices, the Province is investing \$378 million over three years and more than \$1.8 billion over the next 10 years in rental housing to improve housing choices for middle income British Columbians, including seniors and families.

This builds on the investment of \$208 million to help build 1,700 new affordable rental homes that government funded in the Budget 2017 Update.

## **16. HOUSING FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE**

Women and children fleeing violence and abuse need a safe, secure place to live and support so they can heal.

Budget 2018 makes the first significant investment in housing options for women and children fleeing violence and abuse in the last two decades.

The Province is committing \$141 million over three years and \$734 million over the next 10 years to build and provide housing supports for women and children at this difficult time in their lives.

## **17. WORKING WITH UNIVERSITIES, INSTITUTES AND COLLEGES TO BUILD HOUSING FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS**

Government is partnering with post-secondary institutions to deliver at least 5,000 new spaces in student housing. These new on-campus homes will help more students find an affordable place to live while they pursue their studies.

And as they move closer to their studies, they will free up rental housing in tight rental markets, making it easier for everyone to find homes.

This is a part of a new \$450 million student housing program that will allow public post-secondary institutions to borrow directly from the Province in order to help finance new student housing.

## **18. FIXING EXISTING PROJECTS WITH AN EYE TO AFFORDABILITY**

Improving access to safe, affordable housing isn't just about planning and building new stock; it's also about taking care of what we already have. Our plan talks more about this in the next section on rental security.

But it also applies to development projects that are already underway but experiencing cost pressures that threaten their long-term affordability.



Our government has reviewed these projects and found that insufficient provincial investments into new homes in prior budgets mean that many of the buildings started by the previous government will not be affordable for the British Columbians they were supposed to help. As a result, our government is committing more than \$75 million over the next two years to address the cost pressures with an eye to making sure these 4,900 homes remain affordable.

## 19. PARTNERING TO BUILD SOCIAL HOUSING FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Indigenous British Columbians, more than 70 percent of whom live off-reserve, are disproportionately represented among the homeless population and are under-housed in B.C. Our investments in Indigenous and social housing will seek to address that gap.

Over the next 10 years, the Province is investing \$550 million into the construction of 1,750 units of social housing for Indigenous people in British Columbia. This housing will be developed in partnership with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association, Indigenous housing societies, and First Nations.

In order to ensure the right housing is being created and to advance reconciliation efforts, we will look to engage

Indigenous peoples to develop the housing design and delivery system.

## 20. BUILDING 2,500 NEW SUPPORTIVE HOMES FOR PEOPLE STRUGGLING WITH HOMELESSNESS

We recognize the growing and urgent problem of homelessness in B.C. communities.

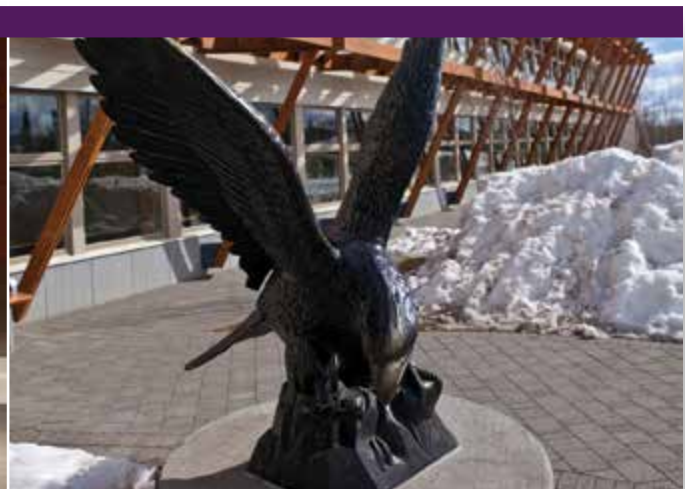
In just the last six months, the Province has joined communities across B.C. – including Vancouver, Surrey, Terrace, Prince Rupert, Kelowna, and Kamloops – to begin building more than 1,300 new modular homes for people in need, with hundreds more to come.

These partnerships were made possible by the \$291 million in capital funding and operating funding of \$216 million over three years to provide ongoing services and supports for those most in need.

Given the urgent need to address homelessness in B.C. communities, Budget 2018 builds on this successful program with funding for an additional 2,500 new homes with 24/7 support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.



*TS'I'TS'UWATUL' LELUM (DUNCAN) PROVIDES AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR INDIGENOUS ELDER AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.*



*DRIVER HOUSE (DAWSON CREEK) OFFERS LOW- TO MODERATE-INCOME RENTALS FOR INDIGENOUS FAMILIES AND SENIORS.*



# **IMPROVING SECURITY FOR RENTERS**

# IMPROVING SECURITY FOR RENTERS

*Too many British Columbians are worried about how they will afford housing in the future and even whether they can stay in the housing they already have.*

Renters are facing increasingly limited housing options as rents continue to rise and vacancy rates remain persistently low, particularly in urban centres.

Owners of manufactured homes are also feeling uncertainty as the land their homes sit on rises in value and is targeted for redevelopment.

People need to feel secure in their housing. That's why we are taking action to support seniors and low-income British Columbians who are in danger of losing their rental housing by increasing rental supports, strengthening rental laws, upgrading existing affordable housing and enhancing protections for owners of manufactured homes.

## **21. EXPANDING AND INCREASING BENEFITS TO SENIORS LIVING INDEPENDENTLY and 22. EXPANDING AND INCREASING THE**

## **RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO HELP WORKING PARENTS**

Rental assistance programs give low-income households the choice of where they want to live and help with housing costs. The Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program and Rental Assistance Program (RAP) make housing more affordable for low-income seniors and working families who rent their homes in the private market.

Over the last number of years these programs have not kept up with increasing rent costs, leaving many seniors and families struggling to get by.

Budget 2018 invests \$116 million over three years to increase the average benefit under RAP and SAFER programs, and will expand the eligibility criteria for RAP – families with gross household annual incomes of up to \$40,000 will now be eligible, up from the previous ceiling of \$35,000. As a result of these enhancements, more than 35,000 households become eligible for







ABOVE AND BELOW: DAHLI PLACE (VICTORIA) PROVIDES AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING.

increased monthly benefits, including 3,200 newly eligible seniors and families.

Effective September 2018, on average, seniors will receive an extra \$930 per year, and the increase for families will be about \$800 more per year.

### **23. STRENGTHENING PROTECTION FOR RENTERS AND MANUFACTURED HOME OWNERS**

Property owners provide housing for more than a quarter of B.C. residents.

Unfortunately, some landlords have taken advantage of the tight rental market and their actions have had serious impacts on people. Loopholes in rental laws that allow landlords to wrongfully evict tenants and unfairly jack up rents have left many British Columbians feeling renting is not a secure and predictable housing option.

People who pay their rent and abide by their tenancy agreement should be able to count on their housing. Landlords also deserve certainty. They need to know that if they have a tenant who breaks their rental agreement that it will be dealt with quickly.

That's why we are updating our housing laws to provide more fairness for everyone.

We have already ended the abuse of fixed-term leases and eliminated the geographic rent increase clause, both of which were being used to unfairly jack up rents.

And we increased funding to the Residential Tenancy Branch to reduce wait times, improve service and deal with disputes more quickly, while also strengthening the Residential Tenancy Act and the penalties for those who repeatedly break the law.



Too many people are left struggling to find new housing they can afford when they are evicted to allow for large-scale renovations or when older, affordable buildings are demolished to make way for new development.

While landlords need to be able to make necessary repairs and upgrades to existing rental stock, current protections are not sufficient to ensure those displaced can find new homes, or pay associated moving costs. Government will make changes to the laws that apply in cases of renovations or demolitions to ensure that renters left without housing have adequate support, and to provide a stronger response to cases where landlords misuse these provisions.

Some owners of manufactured homes have been forced to abandon their investments with little compensation for having to move or find a new home.

This has left people, many of them in retirement, without a safe, affordable place to live, and without the help they need to find housing elsewhere.

Recognizing the impact on these families, the Province will strengthen the laws protecting owners of manufactured homes when changes to land use displace them.

## **24. EXTENDING THE LIFE, QUALITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF EXISTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

To ensure existing social housing continues to be safe and secure, we are investing \$1.1 billion over 10 years into seismic and fire-safety upgrades and essential building repairs and maintenance, making homes safer and more comfortable for residents. This is the largest investment in refits and renovations of social housing in B.C. in more than 20 years.

These investments will also lower carbon emissions, and cut energy costs for non-profit providers and residents alike.



*LEFT AND RIGHT: PLEASANTVALE (KELOWNA) PROVIDES AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS FOR SENIORS AND TOWNHOMES FOR FAMILIES.*



**BUILDING  
PARTNERSHIPS FOR  
AFFORDABILITY**





HYAD PLACE (NORTH VANCOUVER) PROVIDES RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS FOR ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR AFFORDABILITY

*The Province cannot build its way out of the housing crisis on its own. That's why we're bringing together partners from all levels of government, Indigenous organizations, non-profits and the private sector to build the right supply together.*

We will build on these emerging housing partnerships by expanding government's work with Indigenous governments and organizations, with non-profits, and with the private sector, with the goal of building capacity and becoming a catalyst for new affordable housing development.

It will take a sustained, coordinated effort to meet the most pressing housing needs facing people and communities. Thankfully, the federal government, the Union of B.C. Municipalities, many individual local governments, and innovators in the private and non-profit sectors have already put forward their own strategies for addressing housing, signalling a desire to work together to make life better for British Columbians. For the first time, all levels of government understand and are prepared to act on the urgent need for housing. BC will work with these and other partners

to ease housing affordability and give people more housing options.

### 25. HOUSINGHUB: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS. BUILDING HOMES

The province is creating HousingHub – funded by winding down the BC Home Owner Mortgage and Equity Partnership program – to build partnerships and affordable homes where British Columbians need them most.

The Hub will partner with the non-profit sector, faith groups, for-profit builders, all levels of government and others to find and develop or re-develop available land and buildings, creating affordable homes for people who live and work in our communities.

The Hub will act as a project coordinator for owners who are not experienced developers but want to create affordable housing with a reasonable rate of return, to benefit their communities.

HousingHub will also work with new investment sources, such as pension fund and social impact investors to find the best financing solutions for local projects and local people.

## 26. EMPOWERING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The Province recognizes that local governments are on the front lines of the housing crisis, and are well positioned to help advance the development of new homes.

Communities need solutions that work for them. For example, in some communities, the tourism industry is struggling to find workers because workers can't find affordable housing. Housing affordability has become an economic issue. The Province is taking action to put the power and resources to address housing challenges in their hands.

It begins by fully defining the problem. The provincial government is committing \$5 million over three years to help fund housing need assessments for local governments, the first step to building housing for people.

We'll work closely with municipal partners to eliminate barriers to affordable housing and develop new tools, such as rental zoning, that will empower local governments to support and accelerate the construction of homes people need.

## 27. EXPANDING THE USE OF MRDT REVENUES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Province is expanding the allowable use of municipal and regional district tax (MRDT) revenues to include housing affordability initiatives. Prior to this policy change, MRDT revenues could only be spent on tourism marketing, programs and projects. This will help those communities struggling with housing tourism workers more options. This will give local governments across B.C. additional flexibility to fund housing initiatives.



## 28. ENCOURAGING MORE RENTALS VIA PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

Communities throughout B.C. are faced with tight rental markets. They need support to bring new rental supply online. Our government is taking bold action to give municipalities the support they need to bring new rental supply online.

To help local governments, the Province will mirror the increase to the available property tax exemptions provided under municipal revitalization agreements for qualifying purpose-built rental housing. These agreements encourage the construction and preservation of rental housing by waiving municipal property taxes. The Province is increasing the incentive provided to those operating purpose-built rentals by extending the exemption to include provincial property taxes. This will help encourage developers to build more rental housing.

The Province is also reaching out to the federal government to explore additional ways governments can overcome cost barriers to develop new purpose-built rental construction.

We understand the needs of communities and we're doing our part to support municipalities in their efforts to increase housing supply.

## 29. EMPOWERING HOMEOWNERS IN STRATAS TO DEAL WITH SHORT-TERM RENTALS

The increasing use of condos for short-term rentals has been difficult for many living in strata developments. Noise, mess and security issues are just a few of the reasons why some strata corporations restrict short-term rentals in their buildings.

If homeowners in a strata building want to limit short-term rentals, the bylaws need to provide enough of a deterrent. People who live full-time in strata buildings deserve the peace, quiet and security they pay for.



Low fines and penalties don't stop some short-term rental operators from breaking strata bylaws. Many absorb fines as part of the price of doing business.

That's why we're empowering strata corporations to charge increased fines and penalties against rule-breakers who disrupt people's sense of peace and housing security.

## 30. EXPANDING TRANSIT AND BUILDING COMMUNITIES

The Province is a full partner in the Metro Vancouver Mayors' Council vision for improved transit and transportation across the region. As part of this, we will work with TransLink and local governments in Metro Vancouver to increase density and improve the availability of affordable housing around transit stations. Smart investments in transit will allow residents to live, work and play in complete communities, and reduce transportation costs for families.





# CONCLUSION







## WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

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*The housing crisis has been building for many years. No single policy or approach is capable of reversing the decline of housing affordability in British Columbia. By addressing demand, supply and security at the same time, we will bring down the curve of housing costs and improve options for people looking for a home.*

While the housing problems our province faces are immense, there is tremendous will from all levels of government, First Nations, non-profits and the private sector to make changes and make a difference in housing affordability for people in our province.

We will continue to work with our partners to streamline the creation of affordable homes and build on innovative solutions to tackle the challenges in our housing market.

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**VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:  
WWW.GOV.BC.CA**

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