



July 5, 2018

B.C. Rental Housing Task Force:

Hon. Spencer Chandra Herbert  
Hon. Ronna-Rae Leonard  
Hon. Adam Olsen

Dear Task Force,

We have a housing crisis here in the Village of Queen Charlotte, especially for affordable and social housing. Because they have lost their operating subsidies, social housing providers Makola and AHMA have raised rents and are liquidating their local housing inventories. Fee simple building lots are very rare and expensive, and no one wants to build new housing for rental.

What's even worse is that current and past landlords and property managers are converting their rental properties into short term rentals (STR), most often AirBnBs. We currently have 39. While increased revenue is a major driver in this trend, the most common reason given is the risk that landlords face from the relatively small number of difficult tenants, those who cause considerable damage and expense. Some even refuse to pay rent, and under the current tenancy legislation can be difficult to evict.

My Council and I recently attempted to introduce an amendment to our zoning bylaw that would curb the growth of STRs by requiring that each STR property also have the owner or a long-term renter on the property. We thought that it would be a reasonable compromise, but it was opposed by a massive majority. Perhaps if the STR growth continues at a rapid pace, we will revisit the issue next year.

The reason that I am writing to you today is to ask you to include some measure of "**Landlord Protection**" in your legislative recommendations. While it would be wonderful for the senior levels of government to provide more public housing, its equally important to give the private sector the tools and support that they need to provide market rental housing.

Our local housing society, the Queen Charlotte Heritage Housing Society, conducted both a housing needs and demand assessment as well as a public housing forum here in the Village of Queen Charlotte this spring. I enclose a copy of the summary document for your consideration.

I wish you every success in finding the right balance between the rights of tenants and the rights of landlords.

Sincerely,

Mayor Greg Martin