



BC Provincial Election Campaign

CANDIDATE GUIDE



BCNPHA
BC Non-Profit Housing Association





INTRODUCTION

Residents of British Columbia will go to the polls on May 9, 2017. There is no question that affordable housing is the single most important issue that all candidates, from all parties, should be addressing in this election campaign. We are asking you to “Make Housing Central” in your campaign.



The BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) represents over 700 non-profit housing providers across British Columbia; the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHFBC) represents 248 co-op housing providers. Collectively, we represent approximately 100,000 households in the province. As part of our ongoing advocacy for our members, BCNPHA and CHFBC have joined together under the umbrella of “Housing Central” to ensure that you have the facts on affordable rental housing, information on how to engage with our members in your riding, and how you can commit to addressing affordable housing as a priority.

The lead-up to election day is a time for action. We will be reaching out throughout the campaign with information for you and we have asked our members to engage with you so that you can best understand the important roles that non-profit and co-op housing providers play in communities as well as the challenges currently faced by our members and our sector.

So what are we asking of you? We have put together this guide to provide information on the current realities regarding affordable rental housing. And we are asking you to talk with our members in your riding and commit to addressing the issues surrounding the availability of, and access to, non-profit and co-operative housing.

We at Housing Central will also be sharing with our members, our thoughts on the political parties and where they stand on the issue of affordable housing. We appreciate you taking the time to read this election guide. Please do not hesitate to contact us at Housing Central if you have questions or you require additional information.

Thank you for your commitment in running for elected office, and working with us toward shared success in addressing the challenges of ensuring safe, livable, and affordable housing for all British Columbians.

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Co-operative Housing Federation of BC

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CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

We are committed to advocating for our members and have been busy this past year connecting with elected officials at all levels of government to share thoughts and concerns on your behalf.

Housing Central has met with leadership of the provincial parties to share our research and ask them to consider our priority policy requests in the development of their housing platforms and policies.

The Affordable Housing Plan, released in 2017 by Housing Central, provides an evidence-based approach to identify the extent of affordability, supply and maintenance issues, with recommended policy solutions.

We are calling on the next government to:

- ✓ **Increase the supply of affordable non-profit and co-operative housing in partnership with the Federal government and the community housing sector**
- ✓ **Develop a renters grant to solve the affordability gap for renters living in unaffordable units**
- ✓ **Assist communities in maintaining and repairing their existing supply so that it is not lost**
- ✓ **Address homelessness through new investments and coordination of funding and access to housing for the most vulnerable**
- ✓ **Partner with communities to pursue shared-equity and other community-based housing**

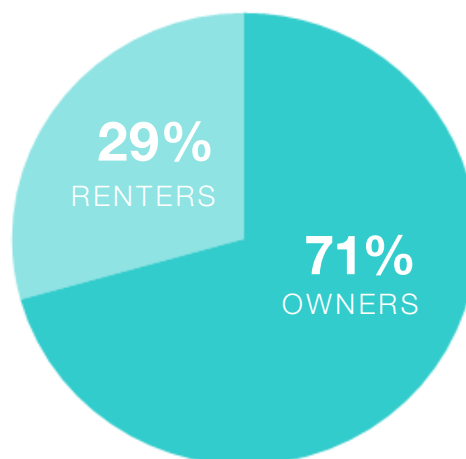
Summary data tables and specific policy recommendations can be found in the Affordable Housing Plan at www.housingcentral.ca





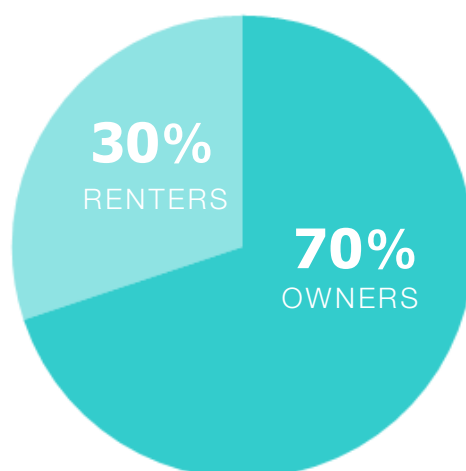
HOUSING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Total Households	1,764,635
Number of Renter Households	517,430
Percentage of Renter Households	29%
Number of Renters Spending More Than 30% of Pre-Tax Income on Rent	45%
Number of Renters Spending More Than 50% of Pre-Tax Income on Rent	23%



HOUSING IN THE CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

Total Households	29,365
Number of Renter Households	8,810
Percentage of Renter Households	30%
Number of Renters Spending More Than 30% of Pre-Tax Income on Rent	44%
Number of Renters Spending More Than 50% of Pre-Tax Income on Rent	21%



Further details and information on the methodology behind the rental housing statistics are available through: "Canadian Rental Housing Index." BCNPHA, 2014, www.rentalhousingindex.ca

Homelessness

In 2016, 205 persons in Prince George were identified as homeless in a study undertaken by the United Way. www.unitedwaybc.ca/index.php/2016/07/14/prince-george-homeless-count/

Rental Housing Demand

By 2021, 192 new rental units will be required to meet demand in the Fraser-Fort George Regional District. An additional 882 new rental units will be required between 2021 and 2036. http://bcnpha.ca/wp_bcnpha/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/53_Fraser_Fort_George_1209211.pdf



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP MAKE HOUSING CENTRAL?

During the lead-up to the May 9th provincial election, we are asking provincial parties to take action in committing to address affordable housing as a priority and that candidates understand the challenges faced by housing providers.

1 Engage with our members

Reach out to members in your local riding to understand what their issues and concerns are, related to affordable housing, co-operative and non-profit subsidies and maintenance and repairs that are needed to their homes. A list of members in your riding has been provided in this guide.

2 Understand our Policy Requests

Housing Central provides you with valuable resources, as outlined on the next page.

We encourage you to review the statistical rental data on your community through the *Canadian Rental Housing Index*.

Information on the demand for new rental housing units for your region can be found in “*Our Home, Our Future: Projections of Rental Housing Demand and Core Housing Need*.”

The most currently available data that confirms the extent of the rental housing crisis in the province can be found in our recently released “*Affordable Housing Plan for BC*.” This publication also comprehensively provides an overview of the issues and reasonable policy approaches to address them.

Both the BC Non-Profit Housing Association and the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC have made submissions to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services. We would ask that you review our submissions to the Provincial Government’s Budget 2017 process.

3 After the election

Familiarize yourself with the co-operatives and non-profit housing providers in your riding. We can help you in that effort.

Reach out and introduce yourself and confirm your commitment to addressing affordable housing issues on their behalf.

Once you have settled into your office, ask to meet with the stratas, and board of directors of your new constituent housing developments.





ELECTION KEY MESSAGES

- ✓ The lack of affordable housing, combined with high-market rents are a problem for low-income and low-wage people in every city and town across our province.
- ✓ The non-profit and co-operative housing sector is the solution to the affordability crisis. Non-profits and co-ops make sure the province's most vulnerable citizens and our workforce have a safe, secure place to call home. We help house people with low incomes, seniors, families, people with disabilities, women fleeing violence, and people vulnerable to addictions and mental health issues.
- ✓ Low-income households in co-operative housing receive rent support under federal housing agreements. With those agreements expiring in the near future, those rent supports also expire. While the provincial government has identified short-term support for 22 co-ops, additional funds are required to keep all low-income co-op members in their homes.
- ✓ The affordable housing crisis can't be solved with one-time measures. For the first time, all three levels of government have made commitments to affordable housing and there is a real opportunity to partner with us to ensure that we have a strong and stable housing supply in the community sector.

WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR THOUGHTS

- 1 What role do you think the provincial government should play in developing safe, liveable and affordable housing?
- 2 Through non-profits and co-ops, the community has significant assets to contribute to affordable housing. How can the province best leverage these assets to build new affordable housing?
- 3 How will your party work with other levels of government to get new affordable housing built in the province?
- 4 What do you see as the main barriers to creating and sustaining an adequate supply of affordable housing in our riding? How do you propose to address these barriers?
- 5 In what ways will you personally advocate for more affordable housing commitments? Within your party? Within government?
- 6 When did you last raise the issue of affordable housing within your party or within the legislature?
- 7 Over the next 10 years, operating agreements for co-ops and many non-profit units will expire, leaving operators without funding and low-income members without rent assistance. What will your government do to save our existing low-rent housing stock?
- 8 Has your party set targets for the amount of affordable housing to be developed each year? If so, what are they and what will you do to ensure that these targets are met? If not, will you work within your party to develop targets?



WE ARE HERE TO HELP AT www.housingcentral.ca

An Affordable Housing Plan for BC

Housing Central has recently released “An Affordable Housing Plan for BC”, an evidence-based approach to identify the extent of affordability, supply and maintenance issues, with recommended policy solutions. This comprehensive analysis of the province’s housing crisis can be found at www.housingcentral.ca

Engaging with your candidate and in your community

- ✓ Sample letters and emails to candidates
- ✓ Sample letters to the editor for your local newspaper
- ✓ Sample questions for all-candidate meetings

Platform analysis

During the campaign, Housing Central will review and provide analysis on the party platform and policies related to affordable housing, co-operatives and non-profit housing. Additionally, we will review and report on debates between the party leaders.

Detailed information on housing and affordability

BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA) has undertaken comprehensive research studies related to housing that provide evidence of the significant need to address affordability and the creation of new housing units.



The Canadian Rental Housing Index provides a detailed analysis of the affordability and suitability of rental housing for various income groups in more than 800 municipalities and regions across Canada. Based on 2011 census data, the index will be updated with 2016 data late in 2017. The index can be found at www.rentalhousingindex.ca



“Our Home, Our Future: Projections of Rental Housing Demand and Core Housing Need” is the first ever publicly available provincial and regional projections of rental housing demand and core housing need for BC and its regional districts, looking ahead to the year 2036. The projections tell us what needs to be achieved and can be found at www.bcnpha.ca/research/bcnpha-rental-projections-to-2036



You Hold the Key: Low-income co-op members in BC are caught in a housing crunch. You hold the key to help keep rental subsidies that make housing affordable. The You Hold The Key Campaign is a joint partnership of the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHFBC) and CHF Canada dedicated to protecting our most vulnerable members. More information on the campaign can be found at www.chf.bc.ca/yhtk/index



Rental Housing Coalition Members

The Rental Housing Coalition includes stakeholders from local government, development and real estate industries, co-operatives and non-profit rental housing groups, who work to seek the cooperation of all levels of government in addressing issues related to rental housing. Members include:

- Aboriginal Housing Management Association www.ahmc-bc.org
- BC CEO Network www.beceonetwork.ca
- BC Non-Profit Housing Association www.bcnpha.ca
- BC Seniors Living Association www.bcsla.ca
- BC Society of Transition Houses www.bcsth.ca
- CHF BC www.chf.bc.ca
- Generation Squeeze www.gensqueeze.ca
- Inclusion BC www.inclusionbc.org
- Landlord BC www.landlordbc.ca
- Ready to Rent www.readytorentbc.org
- Tri-Cities Homelessness & Housing Task Group www.tricityhomelessness.ca
- Urban Development Institute www.udl.bc.ca
- Vancity www.vancity.com
- Vancouver Collective House Network www.vancollectivehousenetwork.blogspot.ca

For further information on the BC provincial election, polling stations and dates and times for voting, please contact Elections BC.

www.elections.bc.ca

250-387-5305 toll-free 1-800-661-8683

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