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**Date:** 3/2/2021 5:58:53 PM  
**Subject:** Summary of March 1st Provincial Announcement on New Renter Protections

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Dear Mayor and Council,

On Monday, the Province announced several new legislative changes that are intended to strengthen protections for BC renters. The changes include:

- An extension of the current COVID-19 rent freeze to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021` previously, the rent freeze was set to end on July 31<sup>st</sup> 2021
- New legislation intended to prevent illegal renovations
- Several RTA changes related to enforcement and administrative penalties

The full press release is available here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021AG0026-000360>

Staff are generally supportive of the announced actions, noting that they are in keeping with the 2018 Rental Housing Task Force recommendations and previous advocacy from the City on the issue of renovations and protections for renters during COVID-19.

### **New Renovictions Legislation**

While there is still limited detail on the new legislation intended to prevent illegal renovations, the Provincial announcement explains that the changes will require landlords to apply to the Residential Tenancy Branch before they can terminate a tenancy agreement for the purposes of renovating. Landlords will not be allowed to end tenancies for renovations that do not require the unit to be vacant and are not substantial. If approved, the changes will come into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

This announcement is relevant to Council's October 2020 motion *Protecting Tenants – Taking Action Against Renovictions* requesting a commitment from the Province to introduce legislation to end renovations. Staff intend to work with the Province to provide feedback on implementation of the proposed legislation and monitor outcomes for Vancouver renters.

In keeping with previous Council direction, staff will be engaging with the Province to clarify and provide input on several items, including:

- The types of renovations that will and will not be considered 'significant' or requiring the unit to be vacant for the purposes of ending tenancies

- The Province’s plan for communicating the new rules to tenants and landlords and steps they will take to ensure equity and fairness for marginalized renters as part of the new process
- Potential impacts on City permit processing and City policies like the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy
- Potential impacts on SRO tenants and the SRA Vacancy Control policy in development (see below).

**Report back on options for Vacancy control in SRA-designated properties:** On October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Council directed staff to proceed to develop a City regulatory solution, subject to final Council approval, that could be implemented until such time as the Provincial adequately raises the shelter component of income assistance and/or implements vacancy control in SRAs through the RTA.

The Attorney General has publicly signalled his commitment to finding a solution to this challenge and provincial staff are preparing a research paper for him on SRO vacancy control options. City of Vancouver staff continue to engage with their provincial counterparts on this topic while also launching internal work to report back to Council on potential options later in 2021.

Best,  
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməŋəm (Musqueam), ləwú 7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətəł (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.