

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 7/6/2023 12:34:49 PM
Subject: Upcoming news release: Rental Apartment Retrofit Accelerator program launch (July 6, 2023)

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will issue the below news release today, July 6 regarding a pilot program to provide grant funds to retrofit Vancouver's market rental buildings.

More information about this pilot program:

- In November 2019, Council approved grant funds for the Energy Retrofit PLUS Rental Reinvestment Pilot with a matching contribution from the Province's CleanBC program to fund and support zero emission retrofit projects in market rental buildings (see [recommendation G](#)).
- Following COVID delays, staff continued to work with the province to develop the scope of work, contribution agreement and the RFP to hire a program administrator.
- In March 2021, additional funding was added for seismic assessments: <https://council.vancouver.ca/20210414/documents/pspc2.pdf>
- The RARA program is launching now with additional funding secured from BCHydro.

Please keep this news release embargoed until it goes live from the City media email account on July 6.

Maria will share the relevant Vancouver.ca and social media links once live, should you wish to amplify on your channels.

Best,
Paul

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

City of Vancouver
News Release
July 6, 2023

New pilot project offers funding to retrofit market rental buildings

The City of Vancouver has launched the Rental Apartment Retrofit Accelerator (RARA) pilot program to future-proof existing rental buildings, making them more resilient to the impacts of climate change, while improving energy efficiency, increasing indoor comfort and decreasing emissions with minimal impacts to tenants.

“Collaborating with other levels of government and partners is key to making housing more resilient to extreme weather events,” says Mayor Ken Sim. “By upgrading our existing rental buildings, we’re prioritizing safety, health and comfort while making Vancouver’s housing stock more energy efficient.”

Funded by the City in partnership with CleanBC and BC Hydro, and administered through LandlordBC, the RARA program has \$3.5 million in grant funds available for owners of market rental buildings to undertake critical energy retrofit upgrades, including building electrification and fuel-switching using new heat pump technology. Findings from the pilot project will inform future investment in Vancouver's existing rental stock while maintaining stable tenancies.

“Our government's goal is to make homes as energy efficient, comfortable and affordable as possible, to use less energy and to reduce the environmental impact of existing buildings,” said Josie Osborne, Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation. “We are pleased to partner with the City of Vancouver to help with the upfront costs that come with home energy retrofits so people can benefit from greater energy efficiency.”

RARA benefits include

- Retrofitting and electrifying Vancouver's existing buildings with air source heat pumps will add cooling and create healthier, more comfortable and safer living spaces during extreme heat and forest fire smoke events.
- Upgrading space heating, water heating and ventilation to low carbon and more energy efficient versions will improve comfort and may reduce operational costs.
- Assisting building owners with the tools to plan for other building retrofits and monitoring ongoing energy consumption will support future upgrades.
- Technical and administrative support along with clear expectations for landlords to effectively retrofit buildings will minimize impacts on residents and maintain stable tenancies.

Applications

Building owners with market rental apartments located in Vancouver are eligible to apply to the pilot program by July 30.

Learn more about the [program and eligibility requirements](#).

Additional quotes

“Renovating our existing buildings presents a significant opportunity for climate action, along with many health benefits for residents,” says Sean Pander, Green and Resilient Building Manager. “This program not only supports our goal of cutting carbon pollution from Vancouver's buildings in half by 2030, compared to 2007 levels, it also makes funds available for necessary upgrades to protect residents from extreme weather and smoke events. We see this pilot as a springboard to a program, which serves the retrofit needs of typical rental buildings and their occupants.”

“As the leader in the rental housing sector in BC, LandlordBC is continuing to support both research and practical programs that accelerate building decarbonization and improve the rental housing stock. This program is designed to help us learn how to retrofit apartments to reduce carbon pollution and to provide better, more efficient, and more comfortable homes for residents,” explains David Hutniak, Chief Executive Officer of LandlordBC.

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