



Richmond Mayor & Councillors  
City of Richmond  
6911 No. 3 Road  
Richmond, BC, V6Y 2C1

**SENT BY EMAIL ONLY**

November 8, 2024

**Dear Mayor Brodie and Councillors**

**Re: Low-End Market Rental (LEMR) Program 2024 Review**

This is a letter from the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition (RPRC) concerning the LEMR Review report dated October 16, 2024, and recommended option #2.

The RPRC members include 12 local Richmond organizations that provide services and programs to our city's most vulnerable residents. Collectively, the RPRC represents thousands of low-income Richmond residents who need secure, reliable, and affordable rental housing.

The RPRC is satisfied with the progress being made and we look forward to the appointment of a third party to administer the LEMR program, including a LEMR registry and waiting list. We are very pleased the City has created a separate Housing Department and believe this is a positive step for affordable and non-market housing in Richmond.

The RPRC membership discussed the LEMR Review and its recommendation to increase LEMR rental rates and income thresholds to 10% below market. We were particularly struck by the number of LEMR units that are 'approved' but not yet under construction (895 units) compared to the number of units built and occupied (546).

We understand that, with the rise in the cost of building and operations, neither developers nor operators are willing to participate in the LEMR program under 2021 rates. With rental rate increases, we hope there will be action soon so these units can be built and tenanted.

Revisiting the RPRC's 2022 request regarding the LEMR program, we asked the City to:

1. Actively pursue and secure federal, provincial, and any other accepted sources of funding to develop non-market housing and shelters using City-owned land,
2. Order a full LEMR (Low End Market Rental) Review, and develop a LEMR Housing Registry and waitlist for all LEMR units, AND

3. Reduce the number of Richmond residents on the BC Housing wait list by 50% within five years (2027) by using rental tenure zoning and innovative partnerships to build sufficient housing for Richmond residents on the waitlist.

The LEMR Review notes the City is working with different levels of government to secure funding. The RPRC is also satisfied the City will continue to work on establishing a registry and waitlist. It remains to be seen whether the City can reduce the number of Richmond residents on the BC Housing waiting list. But we are hopeful that changes to the LEMR program will show the City is working towards these goals.

The RPRC remains ready to assist in the ongoing process regarding a registry and wait list. We have some suggestions as to the length and complexity of the LEMR unit application process and would like to see it simplified.

Thank you, City Council, for listening to the RPRC and our concerns and working with us to make housing more affordable in Richmond.

Sincerely,

Deirdre Whalen  
President, RPRC

cc. RPRC Directors