

February 13, 2026

Mayor Julius Bloomfield and Esteemed Council
City of Penticton
171 Main Street, Penticton B.C. V2A 5A9

Re: SUPPORT FOR 'COMPASSIONATE REDEVELOPMENT' BYLAW

The Penticton & Wine Country Chamber of Commerce is writing to express its support for the proposed “compassionate redevelopment” bylaw, which would require developers to submit a formal tenant relocation plan prior to receiving approval to demolish rental houses or motels containing more than four units.

The Chamber has previously voiced support for redevelopment projects that strengthen Penticton’s long-term economic vitality. On July 15, 2024, our letter supporting the rezoning of the El Rancho Motel to Tourist Commercial acknowledged both the economic importance of expanding hotel inventory and the vulnerability of approximately 100 long-term tenants, many of whom were, and assumably still, paying below-market rents. At that time, we strongly recommended that any eviction process be phased and carried out with ample notice to provide tenants with the greatest possible opportunity to secure alternative housing.

Simultaneously, the Chamber wrote to the CEO of B.C. Housing and the Minister of Housing, noting that changes to short-term rental regulations had shifted accommodation demand back toward hotels. Older motels providing below-market rent were beginning to evaluate redevelopment opportunities. In that letter, we advocated for rental supplements and the expedited delivery of new housing supply through the Skaha Assembly project to mitigate displacement and reduce the risk of homelessness should the El Rancho redevelopment proceed.

While that particular project remains idle, the potential for redevelopment at any of Penticton’s motels currently providing below-market rental units still exists. To avoid exacerbating our homelessness challenges, it is essential that future development be undertaken responsibly, with careful consideration given to tenant displacement to ensure that vulnerable residents are not left without viable housing options.

The proposed compassionate redevelopment bylaw represents a clear, balanced, and proactive approach. Just as developers are required to submit traffic impact studies, environmental assessments, and servicing plans to mitigate physical impacts, requiring a tenant relocation plan will ensure that the social impacts of redevelopment are addressed with the same level of foresight, planning, and accountability.

From a business and economic perspective, certainty and clarity in process are essential to fostering investment. Requiring a formal tenant relocation plan at the outset provides predictability for developers, transparency for tenants, and strong leadership from Council. It sends a clear signal that Penticton welcomes growth, tourism, and investment, while also recognizing the very real human impacts that accompany redevelopment in a tight and expensive rental market.

We appreciate Council's leadership on this important matter and support the adoption of this bylaw.

Sincerely,



Jordan Knox,
President



Michael Magnusson,
Executive Director

Cc: Anthony Haddad, City Manager
Blake Laven, General Manager of Development Services
Julie Czeck, General Manager of Public Safety and Partnerships
Steven Collyer, Housing and Policy Initiatives Manager