



ASSOCIATION OF  
**INTERIOR REALTORS®**

# Municipal Priorities 2026

# OUR POLICY PRIORITIES



## **Modernize Municipal Property Document Systems**

Homebuyers and sellers across British Columbia face significant obstacles accessing crucial municipally controlled property information. To address these challenges effectively, municipalities should modernize their property document systems, including online payment options and user-friendly request pages.



## **Align Local Short-Term Rental Bylaws with Provincial Vacancy Rate Changes**

Provincial changes to short-term rental policy create an opportunity for municipalities to drive economic growth through tourism. With exemption eligibility approaching, municipalities should prepare their bylaws, including transparent licensing rules, so they are ready to apply when the time comes.



## **Establish a Regional Policy Housing Roundtable**

A regional housing policy roundtable of experts would identify barriers and develop practical, regionally appropriate housing solutions. BC REALTORS® recommend candidates support the creation of a regional housing policy roundtable after the 2026 local government elections, to help officials understand housing conditions, pressure-test policy changes, and improve coordination across neighbouring communities.



# Modernize Municipal Property Document Systems

Homebuyers and sellers across British Columbia face significant obstacles accessing crucial municipally controlled property information, such as building and plumbing permits, septic and sewer connection records, and zoning information. The issue arises from legacy systems, outdated technology, and insufficient municipal resources to upgrade. As a result, a patchwork of systems between neighbouring municipalities is created, and real estate transactions are often impeded, straining the already limited municipal resources.

To address these challenges effectively, we recommend municipalities take the following steps:

- Offer convenient and clear online payment options for property information requests that connect directly with planning and tracking systems.
- Embed property information request applications into existing municipal web pages, if not already offered digitally.
- Prioritize the creation of user-friendly landing pages specifically tailored to property information requests, outlining consent requirements, privacy (FOIPPA) laws, and costs.
- Advocate to the provincial government for a municipal property document modernization fund to support these upgrades.

## Questions for Candidates

- Would you advocate to the provincial government for a municipal modernization fund to fix outdated property document systems?
- Would you support standardizing property document systems across neighbouring municipalities, to reduce inconsistency for REALTORS® working across multiple jurisdictions?

# Align Local Short-Term Rental Bylaws with Provincial Vacancy Rate Changes

Earlier this year, the Province adjusted its short-term rental (STR) policy, creating an opportunity for municipalities to drive economic growth through increased tourism in their local communities. Municipalities can apply for an exemption from the principal residence requirement by February, taking effect in June ahead of the summer tourism season. To qualify for the exemption, municipalities must maintain a vacancy rate of >3% for 2 years, based on Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) data released yearly in December.

Ahead of eligibility, we recommend municipalities take the following steps:

- Preemptively support applications for the principal residence exemption as soon as the municipality is eligible.
- Ensure transparent business licensing rules for short-term rental hosts.
- Create STR-dedicated zoning bylaws.
- Offer clear and accessible guidance and proactively communicate bylaw changes to residents and STR hosts.
- Advocate for greater zoning flexibility so municipalities can tailor STR rules to local conditions.

[Click here](#) for a mapping tool on the Principal Residence Requirement

## Questions for Candidates

- Would you support the city applying for an exemption from the short-term rental principal residence requirement?
- Would you support creating dedicated zoning for short-term rentals in the municipality?



# Establish a Regional Policy Housing Roundtable

Municipal governments play a critical role in housing supply, yet housing challenges do not stop at municipal boundaries. Residents often live, work, study, and access services across regional communities, and housing pressures tend to be regional. Without a regional forum for practical, evidence-based discussion, housing policy risks becoming fragmented across neighbouring communities.

A regional housing policy roundtable would bring together stakeholders and experts to identify barriers and develop practical, regionally appropriate housing solutions. The roundtable would be advisory, and would not replace council decision-making authority.

BC REALTORS® recommend that municipal candidates support the creation of a regional housing policy roundtable after the 2026 local government elections. A suggested structure could include:

- Ten to 15 core members representing a balanced cross-section of the regional housing continuum.
- Quarterly meetings, with the ability to convene additional topic-specific sessions when urgent issues arise.
- A short annual public report summarizing key housing barriers, opportunities, and recommended actions for participating governments.

[Click here](#) to read the full brief from BCREA

## Questions for Candidates

- Would you advocate for the creation of a regional housing roundtable for [region]?
- Would you sit on a regional housing roundtable on behalf of [municipality]?
- What housing issues do you think a regional roundtable should prioritize first?

## Additional Issues & Questions

- What do you think is the biggest issue facing housing affordability in [municipality], and how would you fix it?
- How would you work with provincial, federal, and neighbouring municipal governments to address housing needs across the full housing continuum?
- Would you support standardizing zoning and building code bylaws across the region, rather than each municipality having its own rules?
- Would you support streamlining the municipal permitting process to reduce delays for housing development?
- What is your view on the province's housing targets for municipalities, and how would you approach meeting them?



# About the Association

The Association of Interior REALTORS® represents approximately 2,600 professional REALTORS® across the interior of the province. Our members are located in communities across the province including the Kamloops–Thompson, Okanagan, Shuswap, Kootenays and South Peace river regions. Our REALTOR® members are proud of the work they do and their contribution to the local economy. Our Association strives to bring excellence to real estate through leadership, education, technology, and advocacy. Our members are passionate about improving the communities they live and work in.

## CONTACT:

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