

Background:

1. Commit at least \$385 million over the next 5 years to build new public housing and repair existing housing, including seniors housing that has been neglected by this government.

The King Government has not acted strongly enough to expand our public housing inventory, often leaving federal housing dollars on the table. Using provincial and federal funds, a Green Government would significantly invest to build new public housing. We would honour existing capital budget commitments for 2023-24 and 2024-25, while significantly increasing capital spending on new construction. A Green Government would increase capital repairs spending to \$4M in 2024-25 and would work with public housing residents and the Department of Social Development of Housing to determine next steps for capital repairs.

Capital Spending on Housing, 2023-28				
2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
\$64,657,100	\$75,000,000	\$80,000,000	\$85,000,000	\$90,000,000

2. Commit at least \$100 million over four years to buy existing residential and commercial accommodations and convert them into public housing.

A Green Government would commit \$25 million per year, starting in 2023, to acquire existing residential and commercial accommodations and convert them into public housing. This is one of the fastest to expand our public housing supply and allows government to tailor these units the needs of the community. This could include rents geared to income, senior-friendly and accessible units, and pet-free units.

3. Establish a right of first refusal on the sale of multi-unit residential and commercial accommodations to ensure government has the first opportunity to buy housing.

The events at the Causeway Bay Hotel—where the building was sold to investors and tenants faced potential evictions to make way for short-term rental accommodations, without the knowledge of government—shows the need for government to be able to intervene and keep Islanders housed.

To make it easier for government to add to its supply of public housing, we would legislate a right of first refusal on the sale of multi-unit residential and commercial accommodations. This does not mean government would buy each building that comes onto the market. Instead, it would simply alert government to the potential sale of these buildings and give government the first opportunity to acquire it for a reasonable price.

4. Make low-interest loans available to housing developers.

In an effort to bring down inflation, the Bank of Canada has increased interest rates which has made it more expensive to develop new housing. Across Canada, some developments have

even been cancelled because the business case no longer makes sense. During this time of high interest rates, a Green Government would continue to provide low-interest loans to housing developers to ensure housing projects continue as planned.

5. Introduce programs to address labour shortages in the construction sector so we can build more housing.

Prince Edward Island has a challenging labour situation in construction. Buildforce Canada projects that 940 Island construction workers will leave the sector from 2022-2027, at a time of growing demand for residential and commercial construction projects.

A Green Government would work with workers and companies in the construction sector to design programs that recruit and retain skilled construction workers. Additional measures to support employment in the construction sector will be announced in the afternoon.

6. Protect Islanders from illegal rents by establishing a rental registry.

PEI has rent control that runs with the unit; in other words, the rent can't be increased just because there was a change in tenant. However, this is difficult to enforce because new tenants rarely know what the previous tenant paid in rent, exposing them to potentially illegal rents. In some instances, tenants have been overcharged on their rent by thousands of dollars.¹

Among other things, a rental registry would log the rent payable in a rental unit in a publicly accessible database; this would allow tenants to verify whether the rent they are paying is in fact legal. Despite a motion passed by the Legislative Assembly², the Dennis King government has failed to establish a rental registry. Because of this failure of leadership, Islanders have been subject to unlawful rent increases without their knowledge. A Green Government would commit to establishing a rental registry and would immediately begin this work.

7. Make the moratorium on renovictions permanent to protect tenants from unnecessary evictions

The Greens proposed and passed a moratorium on renovictions—evictions that displace Island tenants from their homes due to (often discretionary) renovation work. These evictions were primarily used to evict tenants and raise the rent afterward. [In Canada, PEI tenants are the second most likely to be evicted for renovations]. The moratorium ensures that Island tenants have increased security of tenure at a time of decreasing vacancy and increasing rents.

A Green Government would introduce legislation to make permanent the existing moratorium, which is set to expire in November.

8. Expand government-funded emergency and transitional shelter facilities.

¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-charlottetown-rent-increase-illegal-1.5164764>

² Motion no. 24: Creating a Rental Registry.
[https://docs.assembly.pe.ca/download/dms?objectId=fd12590d-c740-4211-876b-5937633b26e4&fileName=Motion%20No.%2024%20\(Rental%20Registry\).pdf](https://docs.assembly.pe.ca/download/dms?objectId=fd12590d-c740-4211-876b-5937633b26e4&fileName=Motion%20No.%2024%20(Rental%20Registry).pdf)

In 2021, the Greens introduced and passed the *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act*, which included targets to end chronic homelessness by 2025. In addition to longer-term measures to ensure Islanders remain housed, a Green Government would immediately invest to expand our government-funded emergency and transitional shelter capacity. We should ensure that there is a shelter bed for every Islander who needs one, and we would work to ensure that shelter beds are available across the province so Islanders can stay in their communities.

Plan for a Strong Public Role in Housing

A **Green Government** will:

- Commit at least \$385 million over the next 5 years to build new public housing and repair existing housing.
- Commit at least \$100 million over four years to buy existing residential and commercial accommodations and convert them into public housing. In addition to provincial funds, leverage federal funds available for this purpose.
- Establish a right of first refusal on the sale of multi-unit residential and commercial accommodations to ensure government has the first opportunity to buy housing.
- Retrofit public housing to net-zero.
- Provide funding for equity-seeking groups to provide appropriate housing to meet the specific needs of their communities.
- Expand government-funded emergency and transitional shelter facilities.
- Establish a co-op registry to bring together Islanders and encourage the creation of additional co-op housing, including student-led housing cooperatives.
- Introduce programs to address labour shortages in the construction sector so we can build more housing.
- Explore the creation of a public developer to build public and non-profit housing. This could be done in partnership with other Atlantic provinces.
- Work with municipalities to encourage garden suites and other accessory dwellings.
- Make low-interest loans available to housing developers.
- Ensure all new public builds have accessible units.
- Support the development of new housing in rural PEI.
- Create a new housing action plan to provide longer-term direction for housing initiatives in the province.
- Improve housing-related data collection and reporting to inform local housing decisions.

Plan for Protecting Housing Rights

A **Green Government** will:

- Protect Islanders from illegal rents by establishing a rental registry.
- Make the moratorium on renovations permanent to protect tenants from unnecessary evictions.
- Establish a tenant advocate for tenancy proceedings before IRAC.
- Increase the compensation available to tenants who are evicted without cause.
- Create regulations setting out what information is permitted to be collected and what information is not during the vetting of prospective tenants.
- Support unhoused Islanders by shifting away from the failed strategy of continued displacement. Move toward stability and better services by working with unhoused Islanders.
 - Expand government-funded emergency and transitional shelter facilities.

- Move away from the use of police to respond to encampments.
 - Make sure those living in encampments have access to basic services like clean water, sanitation facilities, electricity and heat.
- Give IRAC the resources necessary to investigate and consider complaints under the *Residential Tenancy Act* in a timely manner.