

# Honoring Former Board Members

## Special Meeting Planning

JULY 16, 2025

NICOLAS TRAYLOR, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

RICHMOND RENT PROGRAM

ITEM G-1



# Statement of the Issue

The purpose of this item is to:

- ▶ Approve the official Proclamation of Appreciation for past Board members
- ▶ Schedule a Special Meeting on September 30, 2025, to publicly honor past Board members

# Fiscal Impact

- ▶ **No fiscal impact**
- ▶ Recognition/Awards funding was previously allocated
  - ▶ \$300 transferred from Miscellaneous budget (Dec 20, 2023)

# Background and History of Proposal

- ▶ **12 community members** have served since inception of Rent Board in 2017
- ▶ Board members play a vital role:
  - ▶ Guiding staff
  - ▶ Shaping policy
  - ▶ Navigating challenges (e.g., COVID-19)

**August 16, 2023:** Proposal by Board Member Jim Hite

**October 18, 2023:** Policy approved:  
Plaque with names & terms  
Individual proclamations

**January 17, 2024:** Resolution 24.01 approved

# Final Proclamation of Appreciation

## RICHMOND RENT BOARD PROCLAMATION

### In Appreciation to [Former Board Member Name]

- WHEREAS,** the Fair Rent Just Cause for Eviction and Homeowner Protection Ordinance (Richmond Rent Ordinance) was adopted by Richmond voters on November 8, 2016, to promote neighborhood and community stability, healthy housing, and affordability for Richmond tenants through the regulating of those Landlord/Tenant matters that reasonably relate to rents and evictions, while maintaining a Landlord's right to a fair return; and
- WHEREAS,** Former Board member served on the five-member Richmond Rent Board between 20XX-20XX as Board Member and Vice Chair of the Rent Board to govern the Richmond Rent Program and effectuate the purpose of the Richmond Rent Ordinance by establishing Rent Board Policy and Regulations; and
- WHEREAS,** Former Board member was instrumental in successfully developing a public agency, the Richmond Rent Program. The agency administers and enforces the first new voter-approved rent control initiative in the San Francisco Bay Area in over 30 years at the time of its passage; and
- WHEREAS,** Former Board member's leadership and service is commendable, by expending extensive time reading and understanding a complex area of public policy, and participating at Regular and Special Rent Board meetings; and
- WHEREAS,** Former Board member was vital in directing staff, shaping public policy, and working in conjunction with staff to achieve the high functioning level of the Rent Program, and its consequent implementation of the Richmond Rent Ordinance; and
- WHEREAS,** Former Board member's services rendered as a member of the Rent Board significantly contributed to the stabilization of the rental community in the City of Richmond.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that on May 21, 2025, the City of Richmond Rent Board acknowledges Former Board member's dedication and service to the community.



**NICOLAS TRAYLOR**  
Executive Director Richmond Rent Program

**SARA CANTOR**  
Chair of the Richmond Rent Board



# Recommended Action

- ▶ **Approve** final Proclamation of Appreciation
- ▶ **Direct staff** to:
  - ▶ Schedule the Special Meeting
  - ▶ Invite former Board members
  - ▶ Mail proclamations to those who cannot attend

# Next Steps

- ▶ Host **Special Meeting** on September 30, 2025
- ▶ Present Proclamations and appreciation letters
- ▶ Mail proclamations/appreciation letters to non-attendees

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# City of Richmond Rent Program

## 2024 Tenant Survey Analysis



Nicolas Traylor  
Executive Director  
Richmond Rent Program  
July 16, 2025  
Item G-2

# Statement of the Issue

- Survey aligns with Richmond Municipal Code 11.100.060(e)
- Assesses the impacts of rent stabilization
- Compares tenant experiences in rent-stabilized vs. non-stabilized units
- Collaboration with:
  - UC Berkeley's Othering & Belonging Institute
  - CSU Fullerton's SSRC
  - Funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

# Fiscal Impact

- There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

# Background and Discussion: Methodology Overview

- **Quasi-experimental design**
- Surveyed 800 renters across 3 cities (400 from Richmond)
- Data collected: Mar 8 - Jul 12, 2024
- Focused on:
  - Housing stability, rent, repairs
  - Civic engagement
  - COVID-19 impacts
  - Demographics

# Richmond Survey Sampling

- Total rental addresses reviewed: 20,911
- Final sample: 16,837 addresses
- **400 Richmond renters responded**
- **Completed Surveys: 200 each from rent stabilized and non-stabilized groups**
- Survey length ranged from 4 to 100+ minutes; average time was **16 minutes 87 seconds**, and a median **12.8 minutes**.
- **94.1%** completed in English; **6%** in Spanish.
- Margin of error: **±4.85%** overall; **±6.7%** for subgroups

# Survey Limitations and Ethics

- IRB approved (CSU Fullerton)
- Voluntary participation
- Bilingual postcard invitations
- \$10 incentive
- Technical mailing challenges mitigated

# Survey Findings: Tenant Awareness

- 82% aware of rent control
- 60% knew about the Rent Program
- Awareness lower among:
  - Younger tenants
  - Black and Latinx tenants
- Sources: city website, community events, rent notices

# Impact of Rent Stabilization

- Stable, predictable rent increases
- Improved housing security
- Stronger tenant knowledge of rights
- Increased ability to stay in Richmond

# Challenges Identified

- Landlord resistance to repairs
- Retaliation fears when reporting issues
- Perception of neglect in rent-controlled units
- Financial constraints cited by landlords

# Comparative Analysis Highlights

Category	Rent-Stabilized	Non-Stabilized
Avg Rent	\$1,258	\$1,722
Eviction Concern	36%	21%
Financial Stress	63%	57%
Unable to Save	48.5%	37%
Children in Home	34%	27%
Foreign-Born (Immigrant)	32.5%	21.6%

- **Rent-Stabilized Tenants:**
- Younger and more likely to live in smaller units
- Lower average rent (\$1,258 vs. \$1,722) and Lower Income
- Greater concerns about eviction & displacement
- More financial stress & less savings
- Higher likelihood of being immigrants and younger

# Conclusion and Key Take Aways

Richmond's Rent Program and rent control policy provide:

- **Greater housing affordability**
- **Increased housing stability**
- **Improved housing quality**
- **Strong tenant awareness of their rights**

# Conclusion and Key Take Aways (continued)

Ongoing challenges identified:

- A need for more robust outreach around enforcement of housing quality/habitability standards
- Addressing tenant fear of retaliation from landlords
- Focusing outreach and education to address tenant psychological stress related to landlord-tenant power dynamics

# Conclusion and Key Take Aways (continued)

- Additional support services are needed to address concerns around retaliation and enforcement of habitability standards. Those services should include:
- Continuing to develop Rent Program services that help landlords and tenants resolve conflicts and bridge the psychological gap associated with landlord/tenant power dynamics
- Refocus efforts to inform tenants and landlords about how to leverage their right to file rent adjustment petitions, how to assert rights that prohibit retaliation
- Address housing insecurity through rent relief services and improve habitability enforcement through closer collaboration with the City of Richmond Community Development Department Survey findings will help Staff and the Board develop policies and services aligned with the goals of the Rent Ordinance

# Recommended Action

- RECEIVE report analyzing the results of the Bay Area Rent Stabilization Survey.

# RICHMOND RENT BOARD TENANT BUYOUT POLICY

Nicolas Traylor- Executive Director  
Richmond Rent Program  
July 16, 2025  
Item G-3



# STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

- Sept 19, 2018:** Rent Board received presentation on Tenant Buyout Agreements

- Board directed staff to develop **3 policy options** with varying levels of oversight

- Dec 18, 2018:** Board approved **Option 3: High Level of Oversight**

- Board Directed staff to:

- Present policy at a **City Council study session**

- Work with **City Attorney** to draft ordinance

- Delays** due to COVID-19 and Cost Pool Agreement negotiations

- June 28, 2025:** City and Rent Program entered into a **Cooperation Agreement**

- Current Board may **affirm or modify** the previously approved policy

# FISCAL IMPACT

- There is no fiscal impact related to this item.

# WHAT IS A BUYOUT AGREEMENT?

- Agreement where a tenant **voluntarily vacates** a rental unit in exchange for payment
- Common in **rent-controlled markets**
- Can lead to **tenant displacement** and loss of **affordable housing**

# WHY REGULATE BUYOUT AGREEMENTS?

- Prevent **coercion and harassment**
- Ensure **informed consent**
- Preserve **affordable housing stock**
- Promote **transparency and accountability**
- Uphold **rent and eviction protections**

# CORE PROTECTIONS IN ALL POLICY OPTIONS

- Agreements must be in the **tenant's primary language**
- Applies to **all Just Cause properties**
- Must include **anti-harassment language**
- Tenant may rescind agreement **if noncompliant**, without penalty

# OVERVIEW OF POLICY OPTIONS

Option	Oversight Level	Key Features
1	Low	25-day rescission, no penalties, no minimum payout
2	Moderate	30-day rescission, minimum payout = relocation fee, civil penalties
3	High	45-day rescission, stronger oversight, public database, \$1,000 penalties

# SUMMARY OF OPTION 3: HIGH OVERSIGHT

- 45-day rescission period
- Landlords must file **notice** before negotiations
- Minimum payment = **relocation amount for market withdrawal**
- Agreements filed within 20 days
- Rent Program contacts tenant + maintains **public database**
- Civil penalties up to **\$1,000 per violation** + private right of action

# FINAL THOUGHTS ON BUYOUT REGULATIONS AND OPTION 3

Buyout regulation is critical to:

- **Protect tenants**
- **Preserve affordability**
- **Uphold the Rent Ordinance**

• Affirming Option 3 ensures the highest level of:

- **Transparency**
- **Oversight**
- **Enforcement**

# RECOMMENDED ACTION

- **Affirm** or **Modify** previously adopted  
**Option 3: High Oversight**

- **Direct staff** to:

1. Present policy at Richmond City Council study session (Sept 2025)
2. Work with City Attorney to draft ordinance
3. Return with draft ordinance for City Council approval (Oct/Nov 2025)

*“RECEIVE the previously approved Tenant Buyout Agreement Policy. APPROVE or MODIFY the Board’s previously adopted policy of “High Level of Oversight” (Policy Option 3) and DIRECT staff to: (1) present the Rent Board’s Policy during a study session at a meeting of the City of Richmond City Council and (2) work with the City Attorney’s Office to draft a Buyout Agreement Ordinance.”*