



June 10th, 2024

Re: PH13.7 - Renovictions Policy Implementation: Review of Hamilton Renovation Licence and Tenant Relocation By-law and developing a Toronto Renovictions By-law

Dear members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

The Federation of Metro Tenants Associations is a 50 year old non-profit in the City of Toronto that advocates for tenant rights and provides services for tenants.

We're writing today to support the creation of a new Renovictions bylaw to help protect tenants in the City of Toronto.

Look to Toronto's demolition bylaw

In the early 2000's, facing an explosion of demo-victions from landlords, the City of Toronto took the important step to use their permit oversight (section 111 permit) to create a new rental replacement bylaw.

Today, that program is seen as a crucial Toronto success story replacing thousands of affordable units and providing tenant assistance to those facing eviction. More importantly, though often not discussed, the bylaw led to a *strong decrease* in the number of demovictions happening in the City. Once landlords realized they had to pay extra, all of a sudden their incentive to evict was reduced leading to stronger, more long-term and affordable tenancies.

The Scourge of Renovictions

Today, the City faces a similar crisis with Renovictions - when landlords evict tenants to do renovations. Tens of thousands of tenants annually receive fraudulent eviction notices from landlords attempting to defraud them of their rental contract. In many of these cases, the landlord has no intention of actually doing work - they are simply trying to get the tenant out through fraud to jack up the rent and increase profits.

Eviction fraud is estimated to affect over 40,000 tenants annually in Ontario, with the bulk of these in Toronto. Tenants face eviction from their community, tens of thousands of dollars in increased rent, moving expenses, stress and often all of this is happening illegally.

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Look to Hamilton's renovation bylaw

It doesn't have to be this way. In BC, several municipalities have taken matters into their own hands, drafting bylaws which force landlords to provide extra compensation. This has led to reduced evictions and attempts by both Toronto and Hamilton to draft bylaws mirroring what's been done in BC.

In our opinion, Hamilton got the bylaw mix correct and that's what we'd like to see in Toronto.

Look to Toronto's demoviction compensation

Figuring out a system for tenant compensation shouldn't be hard in our opinion, the City already uses a system in exchange for permits via their rental replacement policies. This uses a 'rent gap' system and the same system should be used for Renovictions. There's no need to reinvent the wheel.

Recommendations

In the last 10 years, Toronto has lost over 100,000 affordable units - a staggering figure. Eviction fraud is one of the ways in which landlords are able to attack affordability to increase profits.

We need a renovation bylaw to protect tenants and we need it yesterday.

1. Consult on the Proposed Bylaw, Not Components

City Staff have done extensive consultation on this bylaw previously. We don't need to consult on the components, tenant advocates are already clear on what we want. We need a proposed bylaw to be consulted on, not components which will add further delays.

2. Speed up implementation

We'd like to see a bylaw implemented prior to Nov 1, 2025. There's no reason for tenants to wait that long to get protection from eviction fraud.

3. License not Registration

A license is better than registration as it provides checks and balances. A license is proof the landlord applied and informed the City, and a license can be physically posted with the notice to tenants.

The choice to choose a registration system over a license for the RentSafeTO program was an incorrect one and that mistake should not be made here.

We thank the City for their current work on this and for their continued attempts to protect tenants in the City of Toronto. We hope to see a strong Renoviction bylaw passed ASAP.

Sincerely,



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