



May 20, 2025

City Clerk  
Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

**Attention: Members of Toronto City Council**

**Re: CC30.3 – An Investigation into the City's Response to a Vital Services Outage in a Multi-Tenant Home**

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Council,

Nellie's is a Toronto-based organization that supports women and gender-diverse people experiencing violence, poverty, and homelessness. Our services include emergency shelter, transitional housing, and advocacy for low-income and marginalized tenants—many of the women and gender-diverse tenants we support live in private multi-tenant homes or older low-rent buildings where vital service failures and safety issues are common.

We welcome the Ombudsman's report and commend its clear, systemic analysis of the failures in the City's response to vital service outages. We see similar gaps and challenges in our work supporting tenants whose homes are unsafe, uninhabitable, or at risk of closure.

We would like to highlight the following areas of the report that strongly resonate with the needs of our community:

1. Vital Services and Multi-Tenant Housing Response

The lack of a coordinated and timely response during vital service outages in multi-tenant homes continues to be a major concern. The serious risks such outages pose to tenants' health, safety, and housing stability—particularly for low-income, marginalized individuals. Recommendations 5 to 9—focused on strengthening Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), defining clearer processes, and improving inter-agency coordination—are crucial steps toward ensuring safety, fairness, and accountability.

2. Training on Housing Rights and the Toronto Housing Charter

We strongly support Recommendation 16, which calls for training MLS frontline staff on the Toronto Housing Charter and the human right to adequate housing. As an organization committed to tenants' rights education and systemic advocacy, we believe this training is essential to ensuring staff understand the equity implications of their decisions and interactions with vulnerable tenants.

3. Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC) Program

Many of the tenants we work with have relied on the EPIC program during housing crises. While we've seen the value of the program, we've also witnessed inconsistencies in its delivery. Recommendations 17 to 24—which propose clearer protocols, standardized response times, and improved training—will strengthen EPIC's ability to respond effectively, especially for tenants with intersecting needs such as mental health challenges, low income, and experiences of violence.

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4. City's Response to Multi-Tenant Home Closures

The closure of rooming houses and other multi-tenant homes without adequate contingency planning has a direct and devastating impact on our clients. We support Recommendations 25 to 27 to improve the City's planning and emergency response mechanisms and ensure that displaced tenants are not left without support or housing options.

We urge Council to adopt and implement the Ombudsman's 27 recommendations in full, and to prioritize the safety, dignity, and housing rights of tenants across Toronto. These are urgent and systemic issues, and this report offers a clear path forward.

Sincerely,  
Nellie's

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