

Attachment 3: Communications, Tenant Education and Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Public Education and Outreach

Following the implementation of the New Regulatory Framework for Multi-Tenant Houses (the framework) on March 31, 2024, the City launched a six-week public education campaign that ran from April 1 to May 12, 2024. The campaign aimed to raise awareness of the framework, which expands affordable housing options city-wide, strengthens tenant safety through higher building and maintenance standards, and addresses neighbourhood concerns related to unlicensed or unsafe housing. It also provided operators with information about licensing requirements and informed tenants that multi-tenant houses (MTHs) are now permitted across Toronto, while highlighting the supports and resources available to them.

The campaign was developed with an advertising agency and supported by a multi-platform and multilingual media buy (with a total campaign value of \$350,000) and was further supplemented by 125 free transit shelter ad spaces provided by the City. Advertising included transit shelter posters (print and digital), TTC bus and subway posters, digital billboards and screens, radio and television spots, online ads on high-traffic platforms, and multilingual online and social media ads.

Multilingual ads were produced in 11 languages (Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Tamil, Spanish, Farsi, Bengali, Arabic, Hindi, French, Gujarati, and Punjabi) based on feedback from housing advocates and tenant groups. The campaign targeted individuals with household incomes of \$75,000 or below, as well as newcomers, students, seniors, renters in Toronto and other equity-deserving communities. It generated 72,342 visits to the MTH webpage and 4,053,149 views of social media ads and posts.

To reinforce the initial campaign's messaging on rules, licensing and supports, and maintain public awareness, a second phase ran from March 24 to April 20, 2025 with a budget of \$50,000 from MLS and 100 free transit shelter ads provided by the City. Advertising included a mix of transit shelter ads (print and digital), online ads on high-traffic platforms, audio spots, billboards, and multilingual social media ads. This phase generated 18,208 visits to the MTH webpage and 2,487,649 views of social media ads and posts.

Together, the two campaigns supported implementation of the framework by raising awareness, driving traffic to City online resources, and identifying the most effective outreach methods, particularly the impact of multilingual ads and social media engagement, for future public education efforts. Looking ahead, public education and outreach efforts will continue, with future campaigns informed by the findings in this report and available resources.

Operator Education and Outreach

Over the past year, the City has carried out a range of activities to support operators and strengthen awareness of Chapter 575, Multi-Tenant Houses. Prior to implementation, public information sessions were held across four districts, with an additional citywide virtual session. Outreach was extended to colleges and universities (to inform students), hospitals (to guide referrals only to Type B MTHs), and Councillor-led community events (to engage tenants, operators and the broader community). The City also partnered with Fred Victor, a social service organization, to co-create a Community of Practice, providing peer support and resource sharing for both non-profit and private operators.

To build on this work, staff developed a data-driven outreach strategy to inform targeted communications and program design, along with a tenant engagement strategy. An operator-specific survey was conducted to gather feedback on the framework and identify opportunities for improvement.

In September 2025, the City hosted five information sessions for operators to review the bylaw and licensing process, answer questions and provide guidance on the framework. Four in person sessions were held in North York (5 attendees), Downtown (7), Etobicoke (6) and Scarborough (10), along with one virtual session that drew 31 attendees.

Together, these efforts have strengthened engagement with operators, improved compliance support, and enhanced understanding of the Multi-Tenant Houses Bylaw across the community.

Tenant Education and Outreach

To improve tenant awareness of their rights under the new framework, the City produced and distributed education materials in multiple languages:

- The “Renter Rights in Multi-Tenant (Rooming) Houses” brochure provides an overview of tenant rights, landlord responsibilities, and organizations that can help tenants understand their rights and access support. Over 3,300 brochures have been distributed across the City, including to all unlicensed MTHs identified by MLS and visited by the Federation of Metro Tenants’ Association (FMTA). The brochure has been translated into 11 languages and is available on the City’s webpage.
- FMTA also visited 135 unlicensed multi-tenant houses and engaged 192 tenants to provide information on renter rights under the framework. The focus of this outreach was to directly visit vulnerable residents in their homes and provide a low-barrier service to share information on the framework and eviction prevention rights.
- The “Preventing Evictions in Toronto” handbook offers resources and information for renters at risk of eviction, including information specific to MTH tenants. Over 9,940 copies have been distributed to date. A condensed version has been translated into

five languages and is available on the City's webpage dedicated to understanding and fighting evictions.

- The City's webpage for MTH tenants provides information and supports available to MTH tenants.
- The Centre for Immigrant and Community Services has also conducted workshops for students, frontline tenant workers, and advocates on the multi-tenant housing framework and renter rights.
- City staff also conducted training for City-funded programs and organizations that provide services to tenants on the framework and tenant rights under the framework.

In addition, to support enforcement and an education first approach, Toronto Building's Dedicated Enforcement Unit Inspectors provide educational materials to both owners and tenants, including the 'New Rules for Multi-Tenant Houses' and 'Renter Rights in Multi-Tenant (Rooming) Houses' pamphlets.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

Between June and August 2025, City staff undertook a targeted public and stakeholder engagement process to support the preparation of the MTH Implementation Update report. The goals were to provide an update on program implementation; to create opportunities for operators, tenants, tenant advocates, community service providers and post-secondary education institutions to provide feedback on their experiences with the framework; and to raise awareness of the report.

Engagement activities included updates to the City's website, direct outreach to stakeholders, communications through Councillor channels, promotion through social media, an online feedback form posted on the City's webpage, a presentation and discussion with the Housing Rights Advisory Committee, and a survey for operators.

The online feedback form was open from June 9 to August 1, 2025, and invited input on key aspects of the framework, such as licensing requirements, tenant supports, enforcement and public education. Respondents were also asked to identify successes, assess common challenges, and provide suggestions for improvement. Of the 453 respondents, approximately half (225) were Toronto residents, while the remainder included 149 neighbors of MTHs, 28 tenants, 17 owners/operators, 11 tenant advocacy group members and 23 others. Feedback reflected a mix of perspectives: some respondents emphasized the role of multi-tenant houses in providing affordable housing, while others expressed concerns about neighbourhood impacts, tenant safety, and the adequacy of enforcement. Despite differing views, there was broad agreement on the importance of strong enforcement, clear accountability for landlords, and robust tenant protections. Many respondents also highlighted that the effectiveness of the framework depends not only on the rules themselves but on how consistently they are enforced and communicated.

In addition, the City conducted an operator specific survey from July 16 to August 25, 2025, to gather more detailed feedback from property owners and operators. The survey explored eight core areas: communications and awareness, participation in City-led sessions, available supports, licensing process experience, operational challenges,

interactions with City staff, observed outcomes since licensing and future engagement preferences. It also explored the use and effectiveness of City-provided resources such as the Operator's Guide, plan templates, and the Multi-Tenant House Renovation Program.

A total of 37 responses were received, including 16 from property owners, 13 from operators, and 8 from individuals who were both owners and operators. About half reported being fully licensed under Chapter 575, while others were in the process of applying or unlicensed. Licensing experiences were often described as challenging, with 59% rating their experience negatively. Reported issues included delays, difficulty gathering documentation, scheduling inspections, and navigating the online portal. While most respondents indicated they were somewhat familiar with bylaw and zoning requirements, 35% expressed dissatisfaction with communications and only 5% reported being very satisfied. Resources such as the Operator's Guide were used by some, though generally considered only moderately effective, and the Renovation Program was rarely accessed. Suggestions for improvement included faster processing, clearer communication, more support from City divisions, and broader access to funding.

Feedback from both the online form and the operator survey on the new regulatory framework has been summarized and included in Attachment 4.

City staff also presented updates on the framework and tenant supports to the Tenant Advisory Committee (TAC) in May 2025 and the Housing Rights Advisory Committee (HRAC) in June 2025. These updates included implementation progress, data collection efforts, and details on tenant focused programs. Key themes from these engagements included:

- TAC members raised concerns related to the [*Ombudsman Toronto Report: An Investigation into the City's Response to a Vital Services Outage in a Multi-Tenant Home*](#). They requested that tenants be engaged in the implementation of the framework and the Ombudsman's recommendations, highlighting the importance of applying a housing as a human rights lens. Staff are undertaking work to respond to both Council and Ombudsman recommendations, with a report back to the Executive Committee in Q4 2025.
- HRAC members expressed interest in both the data collected through the framework and the tenant support programs available to tenants. Two motions were brought forward at the HRAC meeting related to data. Members requested an update on the mapping of displacement-related supports and on the status of the Housing at Risk Table. Members also asked that this update report include an assessment of options for collecting disaggregated data on vulnerable tenants living in MTHs. Both motions have been addressed in this report.

Together, these efforts helped inform the development of this implementation update and will support refinements to program delivery and outreach going forward.