

**To:** Housing Rights Advisory Committee  
City of Toronto

**Date:** May 29, 2026

**Re:** HS11.4 - Overview of 2025.EX28.2 - Implementation of Ombudsman's Recommendations and City Council Directives on the City's Response to a Vital Services Outage in a Multi-Tenant Home

Dear Chair and Members of the Housing Rights Advisory Committee,

I am writing to provide comments on Item HS11.4, regarding the City's implementation of Ombudsman Toronto's recommendations and City Council directives following the City's response to a vital services outage in a multi-tenant home in my neighbourhood.

The Ombudsman's report concerned a deeply serious failure. Black tenants living in a multi-tenant home were left without heat, hot water, and, for some tenants, electricity. The conditions lasted for months. The report found that the City's response was inconsistent with its commitments under the Toronto Housing Charter and a human rights-based approach to housing.

I appreciate that Municipal Licensing and Standards, the Housing Secretariat, and Toronto Emergency Management are reporting to HRAC on implementation. The reported actions are important, including new vital services tracking processes, escalation procedures, revised Standard Operating Procedures, EPIC policy updates, emergency response protocol work, and housing as a human right training for City staff.

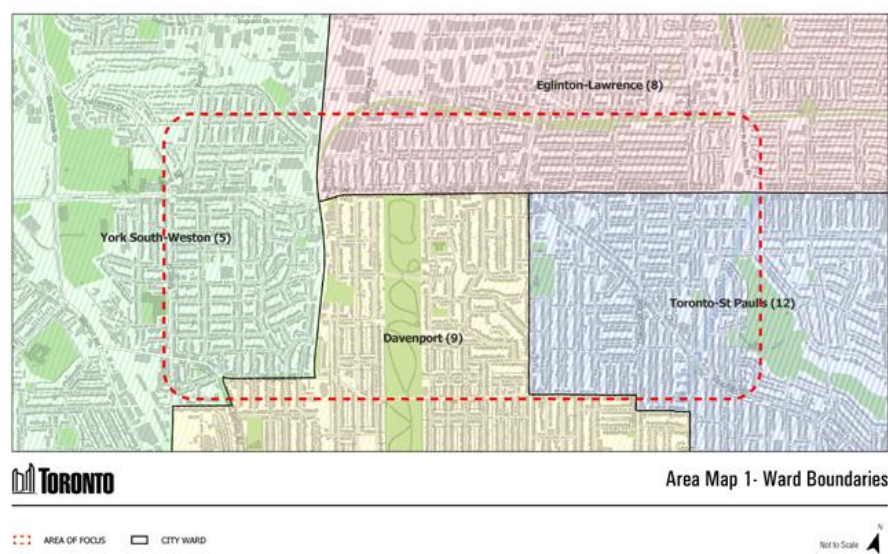
In addition to being a service response or enforcement issue → It is also a displacement prevention issue, an anti-Black racism issue, and a housing rights implementation issue. Multi-tenant homes are a critical source of deeply affordable housing. When vital services fail, when enforcement is delayed, or when tenants are excluded from decisions that affect their housing, the result can be displacement into more expensive, less secure, less protected housing, or homelessness.

**I am asking HRAC to consider the following actions and recommendations within its advisory role:**

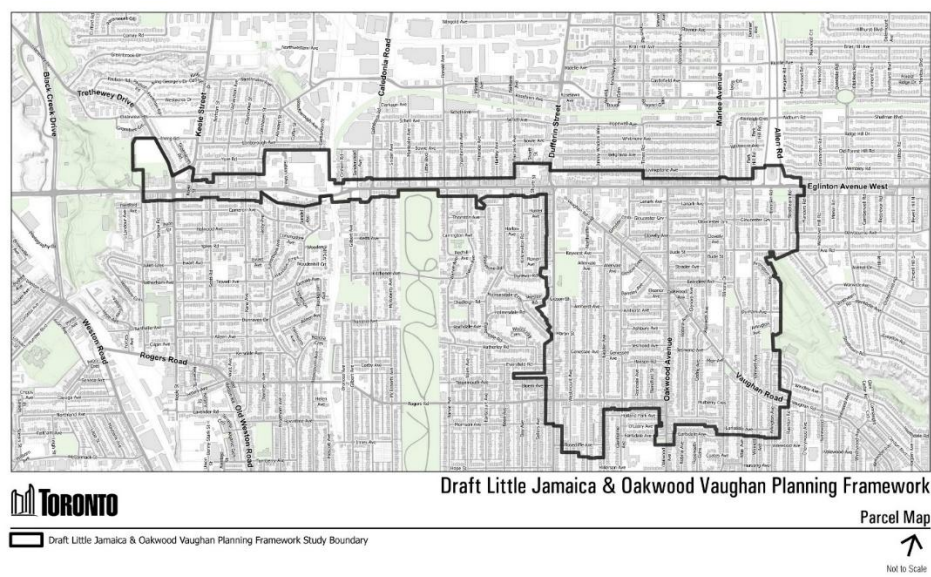
1. Further the acknowledgement of the role of local tenant associations in identifying unmet tenant needs, bringing them to the attention of the City, and assisting in steps being taken to prevent homelessness or further non-compliance with housing rights
2. Recommend that tenants, tenant unions, legal clinics, housing advocates, and community organizations with direct experience supporting multi-tenant home residents be involved in reviewing implementation, training content, communication protocols, and emergency response procedures.
3. Consider how the lessons from this Ombudsman report should apply beyond emergency response.

The multi-tenant home at the centre of this report is located in an area now relevant to the Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework, a neighbourhood experiencing significant realities of displacement amidst sustained community action to encourage support from City offices to build policies aligned with housing rights. Community members have raised concerns that the proposed updated Planning Framework boundary excludes areas where Black renters and other marginalized renters are facing displacement pressures, including the area connected to this Ombudsman report.

Below is the original Little Jamaica study boundary, as used in the 2022 [Little Jamaica Initiative - Master Plan and Aligned Initiatives: Introduction and Status Report](#)



To compare, see on the following page the boundary proposed and being used by Development Review in their engagement process for the design of the Little Jamaica and Oakwood Vaughan Planning Framework



History on commnity engagement on this item, since April 14<sup>th</sup>, can be found [here](#).

This connection matters. **A housing rights approach cannot be limited to responding after tenants are harmed.** It must also shape planning, development review, engagement boundaries, and displacement prevention. If the City is learning from this Ombudsman report, then those lessons should inform how City divisions plan neighbourhood change, how they identify affected tenants, and how they ensure people facing housing precarity are included before decisions are shaped.

Sincerely

Sincerely,

Cheryll Case

Founder and Executive Director, Community in Public  
Resident and community organizer, Little Jamaica / Oakwood Vaughan