

Cheryll Case

Founder and Executive Director

Phone: (647) 905-0197

2575 Eglinton Avenue W

Email: Cheryll.Case@CPplanning.caWeb: CommunityInPublic.ca

To: Housing Rights Advisory
Committee, City of Toronto

Date: May 29, 2026

Re: HS11.3 – Housing Rights Advisory Committee – First Term Review and Key Priorities
Going Forward

Dear Chair and Members of the Housing Rights Advisory Committee,

I want to begin by thanking the Committee for its work in advancing the City of Toronto's commitment to the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing. HRAC has played an important role in creating a public forum where housing rights, lived experience, systemic barriers, and City accountability can be discussed together. I strongly support the re-establishment of HRAC in the next Council term.

As HRAC considers its priorities going forward, I encourage the Committee to strengthen its focus on how the right to adequate housing is implemented across all City divisions, not only within divisions that are explicitly understood as "housing" divisions. Housing rights are affected by shelter policy, tenant supports, enforcement, emergency response, social development, planning, development review, economic development, public realm decisions, infrastructure investment, and community engagement.

When these systems are not coordinated, residents and grassroots organizations are often left to identify gaps, connect divisions, interpret City commitments, and push for alignment with housing rights obligations.

This is a pattern I am seeing in Little Jamaica and hearing from residents and organizers in other neighbourhoods across Toronto. Community members are often doing the work required to help City divisions listen to one another, apply Council direction, engage affected residents, and align with the Toronto Housing Charter and HousingTO 2020–2030 Action Plan. This work is necessary, but it is frequently unpaid, under-



resourced, and dependent on the persistence of residents who are already facing housing precarity, displacement pressures, and systemic barriers.

A key priority for HRAC's next term should be to help ensure that the City's housing rights commitments are operationalized through clear interdivisional processes. When a City-led policy, planning, enforcement, service delivery, or engagement process may affect housing stability, tenant displacement, access to adequate housing, or the ability of residents to remain in their communities, there should be a clear process for applying a housing rights lens before decisions are advanced.

I respectfully ask HRAC to consider the following priorities and recommendations for its second term, if re-established:

Recommend that the City develop a clear interdivisional housing rights implementation framework that applies across City divisions whose work affects housing stability, displacement prevention, and access to adequate housing.

Recommend that City-led planning, development review, infrastructure, enforcement, and community engagement processes include a housing rights review where displacement risk, housing precarity, or tenant impacts are present.

To address these issues, and advance the progressive realization of the right to housing, I ask that the HRAC take the following actions

- Recommend that the City establish a clear escalation pathway for residents, tenant groups, community organizations, and Councillor offices when they identify that a City process may have housing rights implications or may not be aligned with the Toronto Housing Charter, HousingTO, or related Council direction.
- Recommend that HRAC's second term include a priority area or working group focused on the role of city planning, development processes in displacement and homelessness prove thin - with attention to how housing rights are affected by neighbourhood change, public investment, and redevelopment.
- Recommend that the City provide resources for meaningful participation by people with lived and living experience of housing precarity, tenants, tenant associations, Black, Indigenous and other equity-deserving communities, and grassroots organizations whose knowledge is essential to identifying systemic barriers and practical solutions in city planning and development review.

The next step is to ensure the right to adequate housing becomes a practical, enforceable, and cross-divisional way of working across the City.

The right to adequate housing cannot be advanced only through housing programs



after residents are already in crisis. It must shape how the City plans neighbourhoods, responds to displacement pressures, coordinates across divisions, designs engagement processes, enforces tenant protections, and listens to residents before harm occurs.

I urge HRAC to recommend that its second term focus on strengthening these implementation systems, so that the city planning and development review process is aligned with the City's commitments and obligation for housing rights.

Sincerely,

Cheryll Case

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