

Delegation to Kitchener City Council
16 December Council Meeting

Regarding:

1. Inclusionary Zone Bylaw
2. Need to address/stop Renovictions

I am delegating both as a resident of Kitchener (N2G 0A1) and as a representative of the Waterloo Region Council of Canadians.

1. Inclusionary Zoning

I urge the Council to implement the Bylaw, as originally intended, in 2025. The need for affordable housing is urgent and getting worse. Delaying the application of this bylaw until 2026, as proposed by Staff, will only aggravate the situation, frustrating those who are seeking but cannot currently afford accommodation – and potentially creating larger community issues if people end up homeless because of the lack of affordable housing for individuals and for families.

2. Renoviction

As I did when presenting in person to the Council earlier this year, I appeal to you to create regulations or a bylaw to stop so-called 'renovictions'. Increasingly, companies (sometimes 'numbered' to hide possibly 'dark money' ownership) are buying up properties with the intention of evicting residents of longstanding, sometimes having lived there for decades, often seniors on very limited income or young, single parent families. Current rents in these apartments, having been capped by rent controls, are the very few remaining spaces that these vulnerable people can afford. Eviction leaves them desperate and destitute, unable to afford 'first and last month' rent for a new lease, even if they could manage the much higher rents on new listings – the vast majority of them can't begin to afford the rents in apartments in this City.

I implore the Council to take action on an urgent basis to stop these 'renovictions'. Whether new or current owners, there needs to be restrictions and/or guidelines that ensure residents in good standing are not summarily evicted purely to enable the owners to maximize their profits. Examples of restrictions would be that if renovations are necessary, the owner provides interim accommodation elsewhere and the rents after the renovations are not increased (this would cover those renovations that are necessary for safety and health reasons). If an owner is planning to demolish the building to build a larger, more modern and lucrative building then, again, residents will need interim accommodation elsewhere and guaranteed housing in the new building at the same rent. Perhaps, there can be restrictions on the buying of buildings with the sole intent of evicting current tenants to ultimately maximize profits with much higher rents on the renovated building.

Thank you for your consideration.