

Good Morning Mayor and Councillors,

Today, the decision you make on the Renoviction By-law will clearly state whether the City of Kitchener is “ a leader in using tools and resources available to a local municipality to make meaningful interventions, and intentionally prioritized housing with its first housing strategy, Housing for All (HFA).” (quote from your staff report)

Passing the Renoviction by-law can make the City that leader. A leader does not wait until the results are in from other cities such as Toronto, Hamilton and London who have already passed a renoviction by-law. Or rely on the provincial government to give permission to prevent homelessness.

Preserving the existing affordable housing stock is key to Housing for All. The renoviction by-law can achieve this immediately and without increasing the number of homeless seniors, disabled and families in Kitchener. Again, it is immediate. We can not wait for more affordable housing stock to be built. Our community is becoming homeless NOW or due to renovations so the City must take action NOW.

This was part of the message that we, including myself directly, Region of Waterloo's Plan to End Chronic (PECH) Homelessness Co-creators told the City staff when they attended our meeting. It was very clear during that meeting that the Co-creators supported the by-law, that it worked with the PECH plans, and we were happy to engage further with staff on making this happen. The co-creators consist of community groups and individuals, front-line outreach workers and various service providers throughout the Region.

With the passing of Bill 17 Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter which has significantly restricted what municipalities can do to control developers and Bill 6 regarding homelessness, it is foolish to expect and rely on the Provincial government to support building more affordable housing or provide additional immediate solutions for those becoming homeless daily. Again, it is about preservation of existing affordable units.

I agree with the Recommendation of having “Landlord-Tenant Forum (including Regional and local area municipalities, the development industry, small and large landlords, service providers and tenant advocates)” . Again, the power dynamic between tenants and landlords needs to be balanced towards the tenants. The landlords already hold the power and the decision on whether you are housed or not. They are very aware of the tactics to remove tenants and often use multiple different ones to see which will work. The renoviction by-law coupled with the Landlord-Tenant Forum can put additional control within the hands of the tenants.

I am particularly impressed with Toronto's Renoviction by-law awareness campaign that was throughout the transit system. The focus was on tenants, housing as a human right and preserving the existing affordable housing stock. It has people thinking and talking. It gives the tenants' knowledge and power.

I ask that you pass the Renoviction By-law and demonstrate your fiduciary responsibility to the tenants within Kitchener. The fiduciary responsibility that requires you to prioritize tenant

need and well-being above the financial success and uncontrolled of developers, landlords and the province. That is why each of you hold the Council role you currently have.