

Leslie Macredie

December 12, 2025

Mayor Vrbanovic and Councillors
C/O Office of the Mayor and Council
Kitchener City Hall
200 King St. W.
Kitchener, ON N2G 4G7

Re: Written delegation on Inclusionary Zoning at December 15, 2025 Council

Dear Mayor Vrbanovic and Councillors:

I am delegating in writing with respect to Inclusionary Zoning and my response to the December 1, 2025 Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee meeting. On Monday, December 15, I ask you to accept staff's recommendation to proceed with Inclusionary Zoning immediately in January 2026. Further, I also ask that the set-aside rates of 1 % and 2% not be slashed further to .5% and .25% respectively. My hope is that set-aside rates would in fact be restored to proposed 2024 levels.

I was present at the December 1st, 2025 meeting and listened to it again with closed captioning on Youtube and I ask that you please consider the following points.

Larry Maseo, policy advisor to the Waterloo Region Home Builders Association said in his response to Mayor Vrbanovic, "Kitchener is doing all the right things generally speaking.... Our industry has no issues with Kitchener currently. I think just about everybody in our association would applaud what you're doing. You've been quite frankly the shining star regionally and in comparison to many other municipalities in Ontario."

But what about our reputation on the affordable housing stage. In March 2024, the Engage Kitchener Inclusionary Zoning page talked about how Kitchener is once again "leading the way both locally and nationally with the adoption" of the Growing Together policy framework and the phased introduction of inclusionary zoning. It cites the Growing Together framework as one that "builds on Kitchener's role as a national leader in addressing the housing crisis."

Why is this reputation not as important anymore? Does the City of Kitchener want to be a shining star only in the eyes of developers? What seems to be a shift in priorities was put in high relief with the absence of any consultation with affordable housing advocates and specialists at the December 1st Planning and Strategic Initiatives Committee meeting. Build Urban, the Waterloo Region Homebuilders and N. Barry Lyon Consultants Limited dominated the meeting. Not only were they all given an audience, they quoted each other repeatedly.

The City of Kitchener has a wealth of experts who would willingly provide evidence about the need for affordable housing. The Lived Expertise Working Group created specifically to advise Council is the most obvious example but others include eviction experts at the Social Development Centre, House of Friendship, Indwell, Starling Community Services (formerly Lutherwood), Habitat for Humanity, ACORN and even Waterloo Region. I recognize that the City of Kitchener has a number of affordable housing incentives and projects and I applaud this work. However, the need and the statistics behind it are the same ones that apply to Inclusionary Zoning. Why is this not acknowledged and presented in this context of sharing information with Council?

I would like to remind Council that even Matthew Bennett (representing NBLC) when asked by Councillor Deneault, agreed that having Inclusionary Zoning in place when the market rebounds “is really important to have it in the market to train the market about how to make these investment decisions understanding the full suite of costs and revenue or affordable housing policies that exist.” Furthermore, Mathew Bennett commented that “down markets are a great time to do policy formulation. This is a time where you can set the stage for how your market will evolve.”

Please listen to your experts from within. Implement Inclusionary Zoning in January 2026. More importantly do not let allow the decimation of the set-aside rates. Kitchener’s citizens deserve housing security. Inclusionary Zoning is one small step towards that goal. The construction of the ION increased the value of the land in the PMTSAs. That gain was created by the City and Growing Together, not by the developers. The City should determine the rules by which this wealth is procured.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Leslie Macredie