

DO YOU OWN RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY IN THE CITY OF OTTAWA?

IF YOU DO, YOU NEED TO READ THIS, OR YOU MAY WELL HAVE TO PAY HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS EVERY YEAR TO RENT YOUR PROPERTY!

The City of Ottawa is performing a review of the regulation of rental housing. A consultant is to advise about options for:

- Regulating short term rentals (Airbnb, etc),
- Changing the licensing regime for rooming houses, and
- Regulating long term rentals, including especially student rental housing.

Other Ontario cities have imposed licensing on rental properties, especially on student rental housing. Licensing costs range from \$300 to \$900 per unit, with renewal fees and costs from \$200 to \$500 per year. That is besides the work needed to assemble all the paper required, and to arrange the inspections. **If the City licenses landlords, that will cost you time and money every year! While your manager can do the work for you, they will not be able to absorb the City fees or the cost of the work.**

Send your input to the City by June 30. Providing your input now is EASY and IMPORTANT. See the reverse side for how to provide your input. Here are some facts about the impact of licensing.

Rental housing, including student rental housing

While the current property standards bylaw is strong enough, licensing advocates are calling for tougher bylaws. However, the action the City should be taking, if any, is to hire more property standards inspectors, as the issue is not the bylaw, but the enforcement of the bylaws. Rental properties, on average, are subject to fewer calls for property standards enforcement than owner occupied housing, as suggested by the City's figures.

Licensing landlords would reduce the supply of rental housing and increase rents, due to the additional unnecessary costs placed on landlords. A reduction of rental supply and increased rents is not an outcome that is favoured by many Councillors and opinion leaders. However, **many people living in student housing** areas would prefer a reduction of rental supply for student housing, as it would **decrease the number of students living or moving in to their neighbourhood.**

In this case, the argument could be made not to licence only student housing, based on the issue of age discrimination. However, the other side of that argument would be to licence either all small rental housing, or even all rental housing, large or small. All large and small landlords should act in their best interest to put a stop to all licensing of all rental housing.

Here are some arguments against licensing. Instead of fixing issues, landlord licensing would create new issues within itself. Licensing would, in essence, just be a system which would put numerous additional requirements on currently compliant landlords, as any landlords who are not following the current rules and regulations are not likely to follow any new licensing rules.

Landlords are currently regulated due to the numerous services available to tenants, such as being able to call in property standards officers or apply to the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) for issues with repairs and compensation. Despite the issues with the LTB, it is still faster than Small Claims Court or the property standards enforcement system.

Currently, the Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) protects tenants from retaliations from their landlords, and several other support agencies help vulnerable or low-income tenants and students. Landlords find that tenants are not scared to make repair requests, even unreasonable requests. This is contrary to what some advocates say, in that vulnerable and low-income tenants (or foreign

students) are afraid to apply to the LTB or to call property standards due to a fear of retaliation from their landlord.

Ultimately, the consequence of licensing could be that a landlord would be forced to stop renting their units, leaving their current tenants without a home, and fewer units in the rental market. If tenants were afraid to report problems, as advocates claim, landlord licensing would not make them any more willing to report anything, when a consequence could be their eviction. The RTA and LTB currently protect them from being evicted for reporting problems, but under licensing, their units could be shut down by the City.

TO HAVE YOUR SAY, ACT NOW

The City is seeking input until June 30. If you want licensing to come in, then you do not need to do anything. If you DO NOT want licensing to come into effect, you need to tell the City your views!

To have your say, Google “City of Ottawa” and “rental accommodations study”. You should see this:



On large screens, the table of contents appears at the top. On smaller screens, the table of contents appears at the bottom. You have to scroll down to see it.

Student housing and shared accommodations

The continuing growth of Ottawa's post-secondary institutions is important for our economy, today and tomorrow. However, this growth is also creating housing challenges for students and communities alike.

In brief

Maclaren Municipal Consulting is conducting an independent review of regulations concerning rental accommodations, including student housing.

Residents are invited to review a [Student Housing Discussion Paper](#) and complete an [online survey](#) by June 30, 2019.

The student housing survey is found at paragraph 3 of “Student housing and shared accommodations”, found after clicking on that topic (on large screens), or near the top of the page (on small screens).

There are also surveys about rental housing generally and short terms rentals (Airbnb).

Advocates of licensing are particularly eager to license rental housing in student areas. Most landlords want to avoid licensing everywhere. You should answer both rental surveys, and may want to answer the short term rental survey. You may have friends or relatives who want to answer the surveys. Each computer can only answer each survey once.

Be warned that in the main rental housing survey there are 3 questions together that in effect ask: Should there be licensing of all units? Should there be licensing of only small buildings? Should there be licensing of only large buildings? IF YOU ARE OPPOSED TO LICENSING, THEN THE CORRECT ANSWERS ARE “NO, NO AND NO.”

Please make any comments using YOUR OWN WORDS, not the exact words that appear on this flyer.

PLEASE ANSWER THE CITY SURVEY(S) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. The surveys will close on June 30.