

Dear City Clerks Office,

Re: In support of the Residential Rental Licensing (RRL) Program

I would like to express my personal perspective related to multi-unit rental housing in my neighbourhood.

I often take short walks around my neighbourhood and can easily identify 30+ rooming houses (multi-unit dwellings) in a very short distance. Many more if I venture further. They are easily identifiable as invariably they have: at least 6-8 cars (sometimes more) in makeshift driveways and adjacent roadways bordered by muddy ruts on or across the lawns; 8-12+ people living in each house (my estimate based on what I've personally witnessed in the houses adjacent to mine); property standards are not maintained as lawns are overrun with tall grass, weeds, and layers of decaying leaves in the summer and fall months, and walkways and driveways are left uncleared for the entire winter months; garbage everywhere including food waste is left untouched to decay, and large amounts of flyers and other lightweight materials eventually blow all over the street; garbage can be seen literally piled in backyards with apparently no intention of disposal/removal; garbage and recycling bins are left out on lawns/streets for days; fences and outbuildings in states of disrepair, and exterior house doors and gates are literally off their hinges left lying on the ground. I have personally witnessed rats, skunks, and other rodents rummaging these garbage piles and even nesting nearby or accessing the interior of houses and vehicles through air vents and other openings. When I've voiced my concerns to residents of these properties, sometimes they are unaware of the issue and at other times cite the landlord's unresponsiveness. The only recourse is to inform Bylaw Enforcement of these frequent infractions and burden the City with what I've been told is an overwhelming number of complaints. In my opinion, not only is this an unnecessary burden on taxpayer dollars but an unreasonable and unmanageable strain on Enforcement resources which would be better served elsewhere.

It would be unfair to point a finger at residents of these properties as I understand they may not be aware of, or familiar with, standards and bylaws or even how to navigate the appropriate information resources. Also, I would not expect temporary residents (which most of them are) to have the resources, such as lawn movers, rakes, snow shovels, or knowledge to maintain properties let alone fix needed repairs. As an example, apparently due to plumbing and pipes not up to required building code for the number of residents, the house across the street experienced a number of sewage backups one of which flooded the entire basement level forcing tenants to evacuate with only their laptops and the clothes on their backs to frigid outdoor winter conditions in the middle of the night. They desperately went to neighbours for help as the landlord was overseas. When he was finally reached, the tenants were told to "just stay there" until he returned in a few days, entirely impossible given the whole basement, including all their belongings, was submerged in sewage. These tenants did not want to be identified as contacting city services for fear of reprisal. Apparently, the landlord was holding some of

their passports for “safe keeping”. These same tenants were expected to remain there even during the emergency restorations process. This is completely unacceptable, inhumane, and a violation of the Residential Tenancies Act.

As a resident of Brampton for almost 20 years, I applaud the courage shown by council to put a leash on these irresponsible slum lords and to make them accountable and responsible for their disregard of their civic and legal obligations to the greater good and the rights of individuals to decent housing and living conditions. Their predatory behaviour and breach of health, safety, housing and maintenance standards, is unacceptable and does nothing to alleviate housing issues in this city. These selfish individuals should not be allowed to monetize the housing crisis that all levels of government are struggling to effectively deal with so fervently. My personal experience speaking to these bottom-feeders has been met with apathy, indifference, or even hostility. Thank you again for the opportunity to express my concerns without fear of retaliatory violence.

All my neighbours agree these rooming houses are so clearly business/investment ventures intent on squeezing undeserved profits out of a marginalized demographic. This is morally deplorable and unacceptable but should, at the very minimum, be treated as a business/commercial entity regulated to licensing standards and bylaws, monitored for compliance and transparency, and accountable and liable when failing to meet legal obligations. If they are unwilling to pay a nominal license fee to be regulated and monitored, I would suggest this highlights their true deceptive nature and underlying motivation of financial greed and unwillingness to maintain any standard level of safety and public health. If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear. My understanding is that any business entity requires regulation to protect the public from unscrupulous agents so I would once again commend council for initiating the Residential Rental Licensing Program and having the foresight to protect international students, temporary or new Canadian citizens, and all those struggling to find housing in difficult inflationary times. Thank you for recognizing all citizens are entitled to and deserving of a decent standard of housing equal to any developed country, free from predators so willing to exploit them. Again, I applaud council’s foresight and courage to raise and maintain the character of local neighbourhoods, uphold property standard by-laws and fire codes to keep individuals and families safe. I wholeheartedly appreciate and support the Residential Rental Licensing Program.

Kind regards,

Walter Schmanda