



BRAMPTON

Report
Staff Report
The Corporation of the City of Brampton
9/18/2024

Date: 2024-09-18

Subject: Residential Rental Licensing Pilot Program Implementation Update for Wards 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7

Contact: Robert Higgs, Director, Enforcement and By-law Services
Andrew Von Holt, Deputy Fire Chief

Report number: Legislative Services-2024-677

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the report from Allyson Sander, Strategic Leader, Project Management, Legislative Services to the Committee of Council Meeting of September 18, 2024, re: [Residential Rental Licensing Pilot Program Implementation Update for Wards 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7](#), be received.

OVERVIEW:

- The Residential Rental Licensing (RRL) Pilot Program (the, “program”) initially launched on January 1, 2024, and was re-launched on March 28, 2024, after a brief pause for refinements based on community feedback, including a fee reduction until September 30, 2024.
- The implementation of the program employs a multi-departmental strategy, structured around two key pillars: Community Engagement/Communication, and Education/Compliance which are implemented through a phased roadmap that integrates education, enforcement and community outreach.
- The program has seen significant implementation progress, with ongoing community engagement and focused intelligence-led patrols driving compliance. As of September 3, 2024, 2,063 RRL business licenses were issued, with more awaiting payment and the requisite ARU registration.
- The impact of program implementation initiatives will be monitored closely, and staff will continue to release regular updates through the RRL Task Force and City Council about refinements to this strategy, implementation milestones and community impact.

BACKGROUND:

Provincial mandates and housing targets have intensified the pressure on Brampton and other Ontario cities to address the housing crisis. With affordability challenges and population growth driving an increased need for rental options, the Residential Rental Licensing (RRL) Pilot Program has become a key component of the City's strategy to this challenge and to ensuring that residents have access to safe housing options.

Residential Rental Licensing Pilot Program Overview

The RRL Pilot Program (the "program") launched on January 1, 2024, in Wards 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7, requiring rental properties with four or fewer units to obtain a business licence. The two-year pilot program was introduced in response to frequent complaints about exterior property standards conditions, unregistered Additional Residential Units (ARUs) and parking issues at rental properties in these wards. The program's primary objective is to ensure compliance with municipal and provincial regulations, protecting residents' health, safety and neighbourhood character. To date, in these specific wards, there are approximately 8,704 registered ARUs and 800 known or alleged properties with unregistered ARUs in the pilot wards.

Properties With:	Ward 1	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 7	Total
Registered ARUs	1,435	835	2,462	2,717	1,255	8,704
Unregistered ARUs	131	48	136	98	77	490
ARUs Under Investigation	75	39	62	79	60	315

Program Relaunch and Fee Waiver Extension

Following feedback from residents, the program was paused on January 25, 2024, and refined to improve its effectiveness. The updated program [relaunched](#) on March 28, 2024, with the key changes detailed in the [staff recommendation report](#) dated March 20, 2024. Due to the pause, an extension to the fee waiver was offered for applications submitted by June 30, 2024. After June 30, 2024, a reduced fee of \$150 applies until September 30, 2024, with the full \$300 fee reinstated for applications submitted after October 1, 2024.

CURRENT SITUATION:

Implementation Overview

The program adopts a whole systems approach, coordinating efforts with City Clerks, Enforcement and By-law Services, Strategic Communications, Fire Prevention, Building Division and Integrated Policy Planning. This multi-departmental approach allows each subject matter team to contribute effectively to important components of the implementation strategy. The strategy is structured around two key pillars: Community Engagement/ Communication and Education/ Compliance.

Compliance Team Composition and Mandate

To manage the program effectively, a dedicated compliance team of two Property Standards Officers, a Supervisor, an Analyst and six Fire Prevention Officers are overseeing inspections, compliance and data monitoring. Two additional Property Standards Officers have been re-assigned to this team to aid compliance efforts and manage the program's workload more effectively.

Implementation Roadmap

Initiatives under each pillar are multi-phased and grounded in the policy objectives of promoting safe, stable and well-regulated rental housing, while responding to community concerns about property standards and neighborhood character.

MEASURE & MONITOR				
Pillar One		Pillar Two		
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	PUBLIC EDUCATION	PROACTIVE ENFORCEMENT	FOCUSED ENFORCEMENT	COMPLIANCE/EVALUATION
Defining the project scope, objectives and deliverables.	Education and outreach campaigns. Collaboration with external partners.	Intelligence-led inspections to encourage RRL compliance. Community blitzes to address related issues.	Inspections of licensed properties to ensure compliance with Landlord Code of Conduct, Property Maintenance and Fire Code Compliance.	Measure impact
2023 December	2024 April	2024 August	2025 January	2026 January

Table 1 Strategic roadmap demonstrating the phases of the program and corresponding initiatives.

Pillar One: Community Engagement and Communications

Implementation Strategy

To support the relaunch of program, the City implemented a comprehensive multi-channel communication plan designed to achieve three primary objectives: increase awareness, promote compliance and foster community engagement. To reach different audiences effectively, the plan includes tailored messaging for residents and landlords. This messaging encourages collaboration with neighbourhood associations to promote program uptake and with realtors to ensure they understand the non-transferable nature of licences when property ownership changes.

To measure the effectiveness of the communications plan, Strategic Communications is tracking metrics such as website traffic, social media engagement and media monitoring to assess awareness levels. Based on the insights gathered, including resident feedback, communication strategies will be adjusted as needed to ensure maximum impact and effectiveness.

Impact to Date

Since the launch of the program, significant communication efforts have been undertaken to inform and engage the community. A total of six media items, including three Service and Information Updates, one media release, one feature story, and one joint statement, have been issued, generating close to 150 media articles. These efforts have reached a potential audience of approximately 177 million people.

Multilingual engagement has been prioritized, with key communication materials translated into the top 10 languages to reach Brampton's diverse communities. Various mediums to broaden outreach include digital media, social media, printed material, radio advertising, news media, Council newsletters and tax bill inserts. Social media messaging across various platforms has resulted in considerable engagement with over 16,800 impressions to date. Additionally, the new public webpage has 43,200 views and 21,400 active users with an engagement rate of 87 percent.

During the [teletown hall](#) held in February 2024, where over 7,000 households participated, 83% of [survey respondents](#) indicated strong support for the City's efforts to crack down on illegal residential units in Brampton. Additionally, staff collected 216 submitted questions from participants that were not able to be answered during the session and responded to each enquiry following the tele town hall. Ongoing efforts are continuing to track public engagement and adjust strategies to maximize participation in the program. Ongoing efforts continue to track public engagement and adjust strategies to maximize participation in the program.

Pillar Two: Education and Compliance

Implementation Strategy

In early phases, officers' education efforts aim to inform landlords and tenants about program requirements and the importance of maintaining safe rental conditions, with an emphasis on early registration during the fee waiver and reduction periods.

In subsequent phases, the strategy prioritizes intelligence-led inspections focusing on properties with a history of complaints and unlicensed rental units. Collaboration with external bodies including Sheridan College, multicultural community centres and local newcomer programs will help promote housing standards across the city. Inspections of licensed properties annually thereafter will aid in ensuring compliance with minimum maintenance standards regulated through municipal by-laws; and fire and life safety standards regulated through Fire and Building Codes. Future reports will aim to track rates of compliance resulting from these efforts.

Focused Blitzes

To effectively address areas with increased rates of non-compliance, focused enforcement blitzes are incorporated into the intelligence led approach to inspections. This approach concentrates resources in specific neighbourhoods with higher-than-average complaints over a set period (generally, 1-2 weeks) every quarter. The goal of these blitzes is to drive rapid, visible improvements one neighbourhood at a time.

The focus of the blitzes is two-fold: streetscape improvements and interior safety (ARU, RRL and Fire Code Compliance). To accomplish this, Enforcement and Fire Prevention are working collaboratively in the community to address exterior maintenance deficiencies, unregistered ARUs, unlicensed rental units and compliance with fire safety legislation.

Impact to Date

Phase One | Education and Outreach

The Clerks Office, Enforcement and Fire Prevention introduced the re-launch of the program with extensive education efforts targeted to achieve voluntary compliance during the period of the fee waiver initiative. Since April, in addition to the buck slips mailed, approximately 11,000 letters have been sent to property owners with registered ARUs, properties that are owned by numbered companies and properties with the owner address identified as a different address from the property address. In addition to mass-education efforts, Enforcement and Fire Prevention are in the community conducting in-person outreach, supported by informational doorknockers and pamphlets where contact is not made. In total, approximately 1,100 sites have been visited or educated about the program via phone call or email.

Phase Two | Proactive Enforcement and Continued Education

During phase one education and outreach efforts, Enforcement initiated focused blitzes in communities to drive rapid, visible improvements. The first two focused blitzes took place in the field over one week each – generating subsequent administrative tasks and re-inspections thereafter. The following demonstrates the efforts taken during these blitzes and the impact in the community:

	Parking	Grass	Garbage	RRL	ARU	Fire
Inspections	75 (Streets)	4,279		142	7	225
Penalty Notices (PN)/ Orders	210 (PN)	84	69	57	2	25

Table 2 Compliance Blitz, Statistics

Where compliance with exterior maintenance standards is not achieved, City-engaged contractors complete the work at the owner's expense. Concurrently, Fire Prevention is in the community continuing education and compliance efforts one neighbourhood at a time. Thus far, 225 properties have been visited, resulting in 206 interior inspections and 25 escalations through issued orders. The most common issues leading to escalations include the absence of smoke or carbon monoxide (CO) detectors, maintenance deficiencies in smoke alarms, and improper modifications in newly constructed two-unit dwellings. Where construction without a permit is observed, the matter is escalated to the Building Division for further investigation and action under the *Building Code Act*.

Business Licensing Update

As educational and compliance initiatives gain momentum, the number of RRL licenses issued by the City continues to rise. To date, a cumulative total of 2,063 licenses have been issued, of which 1,869 were provided to applicants at no cost. The City has received a total of 193 payments amounting to \$28,950, while an additional \$20,700 in anticipated payments is currently pending. These figures are in addition to approximately 76 applications awaiting the requisite ARU registration.

Licences Issued by Ward	Ward 1	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 7	Total (as of Sept 3)
	389	231	518	604	321	
Licenses Issued by Month	April	May	June	July	August	
	267	249	508	708	289	

Table 3 Quantity of Residential Rental Business Licences issued by the Clerk's Office.

Next Steps, Monitoring and Reporting

As phase one concludes and transitions into greater compliance-driven activity, staff continues to compile data to inform an intelligence-led approach to future proactive initiatives. In 2025 when the number of licensed properties increase, efforts will transition to incorporating inspections of licensed RRL properties to ensure compliance with the Landlord Code of Conduct and minimum maintenance conditions. As Enforcement achieves target staffing levels through its stabilization model, the program will draw upon additional resources from all branches of Enforcement including the Automated License Plate Recognition unit, to ensure a comprehensive, whole system approach. Enforcement will continue to release regular updates through the Residential Rental License Task Force on refinements to this strategy, implementation milestones and community success stories. Staff will still bring forward a future report(s) to Council, evaluating the RRL pilot program policy and seeking further direction from Council if necessary, in accordance with resolution [CW439-2023](#).

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications: There is no financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA:

This report aligns with the City's Strategic Focus on Healthy and Well-being by supporting the City's Community Safety and Action Plan. The program and Code of Conduct protects the health and safety of individuals in the rental housing market.

CONCLUSION:

The implementation of the Residential Rental License Pilot Program is actively progressing, with strides made in proactive inspections, voluntary compliance, and community engagement. The program's phased implementation, grounded in a multi-departmental strategy, continues to address key issues such as property maintenance standards and non-compliant rental units. Program initiatives will be monitored closely, and continually assessed, to make further refinements as necessary.

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