

TO: The Chair and Members of Mississauga Budget Committee

FROM: Peel Alliance to End Homelessness

RE: Support for proposed Mississauga Apartment Building Standards and Maintenance Pilot Program

DATE: November 25, 2021

The Peel Alliance to End Homelessness (PAEH) is providing this letter of support for the proposed Apartment Building Standards and Maintenance Pilot Program for the City of Mississauga.

PAEH, a community collaborative of agencies from across the Region of Peel working together to end homelessness in our communities; want to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief and non-reoccurring.

Deeply affordable housing continues to be out-of-reach for low-income and homelessness populations in Peel. The Apartment Building Standards and Maintenance Pilot Program is an important step in the preservation of existing housing stock, in particular affordable rental units that many low- to moderate-income households call home in the City. It is less costly/more efficient and effective to repair and maintain units than it is to build new purpose-built structures with affordable units, especially during the pandemic as material and labour costs have increased significantly.

The objective of enhancing housing choice is especially important given the unaffordability of rental units in the City and the low vacancy rate of 2.4%, which is below the minimum healthy rate of 3%.

We commend the expansion of the program to include 337 buildings (two or more stories with six or more units) representing 30,322 units. This exceeds the original scope of the Pilot Program, which is a move in the right direction that will have a far greater impact.

In accordance with recommendations from Peel ACORN and CERA, we also suggest the following:

- Implement colour-coded signs clearly visible to prospective and current tenants displaying the score of the building, similar to DineSafe (accountability and transparency by landlord and city, and will inform and engage tenants about RentSafe and their rights)
- A door-to-door tenant engagement program, so tenants know their rights and can make complaints. This is in reference to what Toronto passed in 2017 (40. City Council direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards to allocate \$60,000 of the program budget for tenant engagement to be used for direct door-to-door engagement regarding tenant rights and responsibilities, and advice on how tenants can participate in Toronto's new by-law for apartment buildings.)
(<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.LS17.1>)
- Increased staff levels - Toronto proposed 28 inspectors for 350 rooming houses. Mississauga is proposing 10 inspectors for 350 buildings.

If effectively established and enforced (with adequate staffing levels and clear standards, expectations and enforcement mechanisms), the project objectives will be achieved, which will be of great benefit to tenants in the City.

Thank you,
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