

# PEEL ACORN 2022 MUNICIPAL HOUSING PLATFORM





# INTRODUCTION

Peel ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now), is a membership-based community union made up of low- to moderate-income people. Founded in 2004, ACORN Canada is a national, independent, membership-based organization with 160,000+ members in 24+ neighbourhood chapters across Canada. Peel ACORN is organizing in Mississauga and Brampton.

ACORN believes that social and economic justice can best be achieved with a city-wide membership who are invested in their organization and focused on building community power for change.

The municipal election for Mississauga and Brampton is on October 24, 2022. This document provides a summary of the local campaigns Peel ACORN members need candidates to commit to champion if elected! ACORN members want an **affordable and liveable city**.





# MUNICIPAL PLATFORM

## HEALTHY HOMES

Peel ACORN won the Mississauga RentSafe program in 2021. Now called Mississauga Apartment Rental Compliance (MARC) program, the city is implementing a five-year pilot starting July 2022. Modelled on the Toronto RentSafe program, the program aims to ensure apartment buildings are well-maintained to support a safe, secure and livable community through proactive inspections.

**Tenant engagement is key to the successful implementation of the program.** The city needs to ensure that the tenants are sufficiently aware of the program and are able to file complaints. Further, timely action needs to be taken to hold the landlords accountable.

Peel ACORN wants the city of Brampton to adopt a similar program.

- Implementation of a strong RentSafe program in Brampton similar to those in Mississauga and Toronto.
- Require all landlords to register and this information should be made available in a publicly available database.
- Proactive inspections of apartment buildings, including outreach to tenants to ensure in-suite issues are addressed.
- A cost recovery model that ensures the cost of inspections, are paid for by the landlord through an annual per-unit-fee. In Toronto, for example, for 2020, the landlords need to register with the city. The registration and renewal fee was \$11.24 per residential unit. This fee includes the cost of City-initiated building evaluations.
- Clear display of problems found during inspection in public areas, similar to the DineSafe program for restaurants.
- Hire bylaw inspectors to carry out inspections.
- Active tenant engagement and tenant awareness regarding the by law so that tenants can file complaints.



# MUNICIPAL PLATFORM

## AFFORDABLE HOMES

Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) is a powerful planning tool that ensures a predetermined amount of affordable housing is included in new residential developments. This tool dates back more than 40 years when it was implemented in several US jurisdictions. Given the current state of the housing crisis and its worsening situation in Peel region, the importance of a policy such as IZ cannot be overstated.

We know that it's not the entire solution but a piece of it. The City of Mississauga recently approved its IZ bylaw. However, the bylaw can be improved further by making changes so that more and more affordable housing can be made available for people who need it most. The city of Brampton is currently undertaking consultations with different stakeholders and doing information sessions around IZ.

Peel ACORN undertook a survey to understand what kind of affordable housing people want. The survey was released publicly. The survey report can be accessed here: <https://acorncanada.org/resources/city-mississauga-inclusionary-zoning-policy-what-do-people-want/>

The survey clearly highlights the aspects that must be addressed in an IZ policy.

### **Peel ACORN wants the cities to make a strong affordable housing plan.**

- Require developers to include 20-30% of affordable units in their new projects
- Any development with 60 units or more should have IZ rules applied.
- Apply 'IZ' requirements all across the city.
- Affordable housing needs to be defined to rent to gear income (RGI) units rather than merely “below average market”.
- Affordable housing needs to remain affordable for perpetuity.



# MUNICIPAL PLATFORM

## STOP RENOVITIONS

Several cities are seeing landlords using renovations as a tactic to evict long-term tenants. Recently in Brampton, several tenants living in buildings owned by Pulis Investments were offered buyouts so that the landlord can “upgrade” the units and jack up the rent as soon as the tenant moves out. By doing so, the landlord is stripping away the tenants’ right to return once the renovations are complete. The current provincial Residential Tenancies Act does not protect tenants’ rights adequately in case of renovations.

ACORN won a strong anti-renoviction bylaw in New Westminster which saw zero renovictions since the amendments were put into place. ACORN is pushing for similar protections in several other cities including Toronto, Ottawa and Hamilton for a strong anti-renoviction bylaw. **There is a lot that the cities can do to make sure that tenants’ rights are protected in case of renovations.**

The cities of Mississauga and Brampton can champion this by adopting a strong anti-renoviction bylaw.

- The cities must immediately create strong protections against renovictions and take out the financial incentive landlords and developers have to displace tenants.
- Implement a tenant relocation assistance policy - including help finding a new place to rent, if requested; rent top-up payments, if needed, to bridge the gap between rent for the new unit and existing rent level; financial support with moving; and the right to return to the new development at the same rent.
- Major financial penalties if right to return is interfered with.
- Public register of tenant buyouts, monitor the sale of rental buildings and inform tenants of their rights
- A landlord and tenant registry to track displacements during construction and ensure the right to return is enforced.
- No public funds, or permit approvals to predatory landlords.

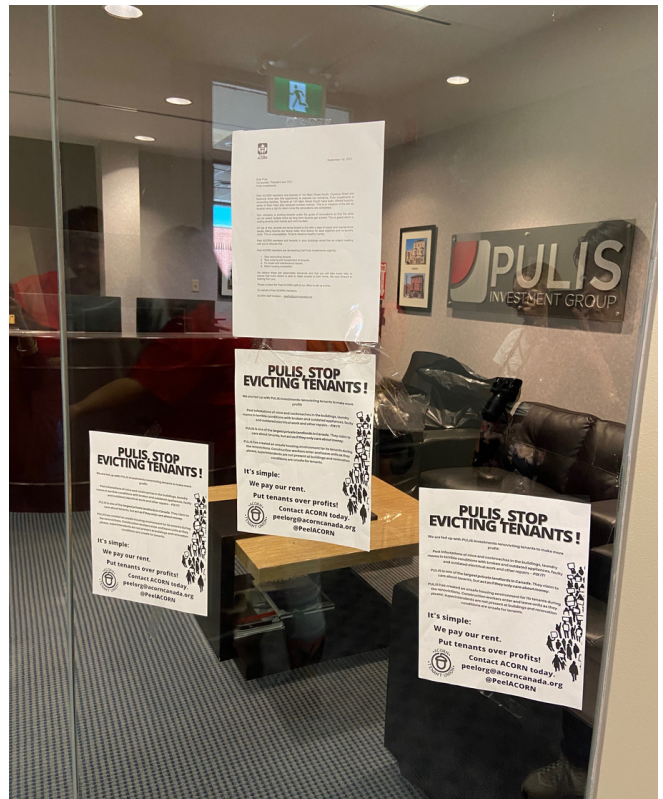
# NEED FOR AN ANTI-RENOVICTION BYLAW

Peel ACORN has been door-knocking in Brampton buildings owned by a corporate landlord - PULIS - who is trying to renovict tenants.

Dawn Barger, a Peel ACORN member, was among several other tenants who was offered a buyout of \$15,000 but the only one who has thus far received an eviction notice to vacate for renovations to the unit.

She has been advised, according to the N13, that she would need to vacate her apartment by the end of August.

Dawn said: "But, I'm not leaving,"



# VOTE!

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October 24, 2022: Voting Day



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