



21 April 2026

City Council
City of Toronto
100 Queen St W
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

RE: Item 2026.PH29.4 and the Toronto ACORN 2026 State of Repair Report

Dear City Clerk,

We are writing in regards to Item 2026.PH.29.4, currently under consideration by City Council.

From January 15, 2026 to March 5, 2026, Toronto ACORN's Tenant Survey was open. It collected 339 responses. The results of this survey paint a picture of substandard living conditions in Toronto's aging apartment stock. We have attached the full [2026 State of Repair Report](#) for your review.

Much of the legislation governing a person's experience as a renter in Toronto is within provincial jurisdiction. Rent control—or lack thereof—along with the imbalanced Landlord & Tenant Board and the weak laws around making older buildings wheelchair-accessible, are all responsibilities of the Government of Ontario.

But property standards and their enforcement are mostly in the City's hands. City Council has the power to ensure every tenant has a safe and healthy home. To do so, the RentSafeTO program must be strengthened.

Our survey data shows that aside from an apparent reduction in reports of bedbugs, many of the other poor conditions that Toronto tenants can experience have largely not improved over the last decade, from cockroaches, to low heat during winter, to trouble getting repairs done, to feeling threatened even asking their landlord for repairs.

Awareness of RentSafeTO has improved, but this hasn't necessarily led to a better tenant experience with the program. Many respondents feel the program needs real teeth—strong enforcement tools and the willingness to use them—if it is to achieve its mission of ensuring that tenants live in safe, well-maintained buildings.

This is also dependent on its success in building and maintaining trust with tenants; we need to believe the program works if we're expected to continue calling 311 to report property standards



violations. Otherwise, the 10% of respondents who said there was no point in calling the City is only going to grow.

With the proposed colour-coded evaluation signage and remedial action framework, the RentSafeTO Update Report before the Committee today represents the culmination of over two decades of tenant organizing in Toronto. Tenants have long called on City Hall for these changes, and we're relieved to finally see these important enforcement tools being implemented.

But there is a lot missing from the RentSafeTO Update Report that needs to be addressed to give the RentSafeTO program teeth. In addition to the recommendations laid out in [our report](#), we draw particular attention to the following recommendations, and urge Councillors to enact these recommendations before adopting the RentSafeTO Update Report:

- **End “education first” enforcement – if a Bylaw Enforcement Officer sees a property standards violation, then they should issue an Order to Comply.**
- **Conduct in-unit inspections as part of evaluations.**
- **Publish Standard Operating Procedures so tenants can know what to expect from enforcement and when.**
- **Have clear and effective follow-up processes. Make sure that files aren't closed if the work isn't done, and uphold “good workmanlike manner” in the quality of repairs.**
- **Mandate a universal work order form.**
- **Add evening capacity for Bylaw Enforcement Officers, to better accommodate tenants.**

We urge you to take this opportunity to stand up for tenants in Toronto.

Sincerely yours,

The Toronto ACORN Board

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Chair, Scarborough ACORN

Alejandra Ruiz Vargas
Chair, East York ACORN

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