



July 8, 2026

Planning and Housing Committee

RE: Rental Renovation Licence By-law – Response to Current Proposal

Dear City Councillors,

Please see below Ottawa ACORN's written submission regarding the urgent need for the City to pass a *strong* renoviction bylaw. As is, city staff are recommending the weakest bylaw in Ontario. We are urging committee members to pass a bylaw with real teeth, just like Hamilton, Toronto, Waterloo, and Mississauga.

What is ACORN?

ACORN is a grassroots tenant and community organization with a membership of low and moderate income tenants in Ottawa. We started organizing in the city in 2006 and have four chapters: Ottawa-Vanier (Vanier, Overbrook, Gloucester), Central Ottawa (Centretown, Lowertown, Sandy Hill), South Ottawa (Elmvale, Herongate, South Keys) and Ottawa West (Britannia, Carlington, Nepean).

Background

Since 2015, Ottawa ACORN has been advocating for strong municipal policies to protect tenants from mass displacement and to save affordable housing. Over the past ten years, our members have led organizing in their buildings to defend their homes from predatory corporate landlords who are looking to evict tenants in rent controlled units so that they can raise rents.

ACORN members have organized tirelessly through building and neighbourhood tenant meetings, actions, town halls, and workshops to ensure its members and tenants city-wide know their rights and how to work with their neighbours to defend their homes. Additionally, ACORN members have met with city councillors and city staff in the previous and current term to bring these issues forward and demand local action.

In January 2025, ACORN members were pleased to see this committee take steps towards a Rental Renovation Licence Bylaw. Now, staff are recommending a weak bylaw that only requires landlords to get a license, get a building permit, and hand tenants an eviction education guide.

An education brochure will not stop corporate greed. Over a dozen cities across Ontario, have already passed or are currently passing stronger municipal protections. If committee passes this weak staff proposal tomorrow, Ottawa will be left behind with the weakest tenant protections in the province (see table 1).

Table 1: Municipal Scan of Renoviction Bylaws in Ontario

Municipality	Status	If passed, does the bylaw include a qualified persons report?	If passed, does the bylaw include temporary accommodation or rent gap payments?	If passed, does the bylaw include moving costs?
Aurora	In progress			
Chatham-Kent	In progress			
Guelph	In progress			
Hamilton	In effect	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kitchener	Passed	Yes	No	No
London	In effect	Yes	No	No
Mississauga	Passed	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sarnia	In progress			
Smith Falls	In progress			
Toronto	In effect	Yes	Yes	Yes
Waterloo	Passed	Yes	Yes	Yes
Whitby	In progress			

The Proof That Strong Bylaws Work

We know that a strong municipal law stops corporate landlords from abusing the system. Look at the clear evidence from Hamilton, the first Ontario city to pass a real renoviction bylaw. According to Hamilton's March 2026 city staff report:

- N13 eviction filings dropped from 119 down to just 23. That is a massive reduction of over 80% because the bylaw made bad faith renovictions a bad business move.
- *Note that N13s can also be issued for evictions for conversion or demolition so the 23 that were filed at the LTB are likely for those reasons.*
- Only one renovation licence was issued in the city, proving that landlords can easily do necessary repairs while tenants stay in their homes.

Compare this data to the City of London, whose council chose a weaker approach:

- 7 licenses were issued by the city, despite London being a smaller city with fewer rental buildings. N13 data from the city is not available.

Evidence shows that bylaws that put landlords financially on the hook for tenants' temporary displacement with requirements for temporary accommodations, rent gap payments and moving costs act as a stronger deterrent. This model works because it takes the profit out of renovictions.

Key Statistics

Ottawa ACORN's [2026 Hidden Renovictions report](#) shows that official data from the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) is just the tip of the iceberg:

- Only 4.7% of renovictions tracked on the ground by ACORN ever show up in official LTB data. Between 2022 and 2025, ACORN tracked 510 renovictions, but only 24 went to the board.
- Landlords use aggressive "cash for keys" offers and intense harassment to force tenants out before a filing ever happens. Based on this reality, we estimate that over 7,300 units in Ottawa were hit with renovictions between 2010 and 2023. That is more than 500 affordable homes destroyed every single year.
- Provincial law claims tenants have a "right to return" to their home at the same rent after renovations. But the City's own ["what we learned" report](#) proved that less than 5% of renovicted tenants ever get back into their homes.

Renovictions target our neighbours who are on fixed incomes, seniors, women, and people with disabilities. When these vulnerable tenants are displaced, they are forced into a brutal rental market where empty units cost \$700+ more per month.

Why The Current Proposal Doesn't Go Far Enough

The current proposal claims that an eviction education guide and a permit requirement are enough. This is wrong. Educating tenants on their weak rights does nothing to deter a profit-driven landlord from pressuring them to move out. Under the current proposal, tenants are still on the hook for:

- Finding temporary housing at much higher market rents during renovations.
- Paying thousands of dollars out of pocket for moving costs twice.
- Paying private investigator to track the landlord's progress and search online ads to make sure the landlord isn't illegally re-renting their home to someone else.

ACORN's Demands for a Strong Renoviction Bylaw

Ottawa ACORN is demanding that the Planning and Housing Committee strengthen the current proposal with the following amendments:

- Qualified Persons Report: The license application must include a report from a qualified engineer stating that vacancy is absolutely required to do the work. This is part of every single other renoviction bylaw in the province and was even proposed in Ontario's Bill 97, though it is still not enacted.
- Relocation Support: The landlord must provide comparable temporary housing (same size and rent) or pay a rental top up (rent gap payment) for the entire duration of the renovations until the tenant can return to their original unit.
- Moving Allowance: The landlord must cover moving costs for the tenant to move out and to move back into their home.
- Real Enforcement: The City must issue escalating daily fines for any landlord who fails to comply.

Everyday people in Ottawa overwhelmingly support these protections.

In the City's own survey, over 72% of all respondents (which included tenants, homeowners AND landlords) strongly agreed that landlords should be forced to get a licence, provide engineer reports, cover moving costs, and provide comparable housing plans.

Inaction is costing our city affordable housing and driving families into shelters and onto the streets. Tenants across the city are urging you to pass a strong bylaw that protects our homes.

Sincerely,

Ottawa ACORN

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