

**SUBMISSION TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF TORONTO
REGARDING PROPOSED REGULATORY AND LICENSING STRATEGY FOR
MULTI-TENANT HOUSES & CONSULTATION PLAN**

ITEM EX 18.13

This submission is made on behalf of the Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario – a community legal aid clinic with a provincial mandate to advance and protect the interests of low-income tenants.

The staff report before you is right on target in a number of places:

- It acknowledges the importance of multi-tenant houses, or rooming houses, as part of Toronto's affordable rental housing stock.
- It recognizes that this housing serves a diverse range of tenants including students, seniors, new immigrants and low/moderate income individuals.
- It admits that the current zoning regime is a patchwork that creates instability in the business of providing a basic need for these tenants.
- It clearly states that life safety and quality of life must be the enforcement priority and that more permissive zoning and an appropriate regulatory/licensing regime will advance this priority.

We believe that this demonstrates real progress. We need to bring this form of housing from out of the shadows. We need to include the people who live in this housing as full members of our communities. The staff report recognizes this. We ask the Executive Committee to do the same.

Because we see progress here, we are supporting the report's recommendation. But we make the further recommendation that the timetable set out in the report be compressed from one year to six months.

The proposed consultation process and further report will, at best, result in a temporary solution for part of the City. We recognize that everything cannot be done at once. But permitting the staff to take six months to plan, co-ordinate and prepare for collecting further public feedback on a temporary solution for five communities is not acceptable. The report before you is the result of a two-year consultation process. The most significant issues proposed for further consultation have already been thoroughly canvassed. Another nine months is not required to determine that there are a wide range of views on these questions.

What is required now is the application of the professional judgment of the planning and licensing & standards staff to the first stage of addressing the "unstable patchwork". This does not mean that that the public cannot be included in the process. But you need a report that provides expert advice on appropriate measures for the pilot project. Then you will be in a position to consider if this

project will be useful step to the adoption of City-wide by-laws that effectively address the housing and community needs the report before you identifies.

Some members of the Committee may take pride in their ability to defer consideration of this matter time and time again. May I remind you that the “unstable patchwork” of regulations contained in the current Consolidated Zoning By-law is now before the Ontario Municipal Board. If Council is unable or unwilling to move forward on this file, you may find someone else moving it forward for you. But it is Toronto City Council that should be meeting the urgent need of rooming house tenants for a proper legal regime. Adopting the staff report with an accelerated timetable will be a small but important step.