



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Kelowna

Date: January 31, 2025

City of Kelowna
Council and Mayor
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1J4

Dear Mayor and Council,

Re: Proposed Tenant Protection Regulation - Eviction Due to Re-Development

On behalf of the Canadian Mental Health Association-Kelowna and District (CMHA Kelowna), we would like to express our thoughts on the City of Kelowna's proposed tenant protection regulation. While we commend the City's efforts to provide a financial buffer to tenants facing displacement, we believe that the proposed measures do not fully address the complex challenges that renters experience in these situations. The rising cost of housing in Kelowna has already placed significant strain on low- and moderate-income individuals and families.

In relation to the issue at hand, CMHA Kelowna operates a scattered-site housing program, whereby the agency holds leases on rental properties in the community, enters into a program agreement with program participants, and upon successful completion of the program, the lease converts into the name of the participant, and they are able to live in their rental for as long as they choose. This program has run successfully for a number of years, and we have had a number of successes where people have left experiencing being unhoused, and with the proper support, have made the connections and built the skills to become excellent tenants.

In 2024, our program was required to relocate 20 residents in 3 separate scenarios. Two were the result of re-development, while one was the result of renoviction, which I recognize is out of scope for the proposed regulation. The one that has the most impact and direct link to this policy is the re-development of 768 Badke Rd., a building we held units in for years. Some tangible examples from this building in terms of existing rents to new rents that tenants, upon finding housing, had to pay, demonstrate where the compensation amounts in the proposed regulation amounts may not be sufficient for

some renters leaving these buildings. The following data, demonstrate the impact for some tenants:

- We saw tenants experiencing rent increases of 100%, going from \$750 per month up to \$1,500 in a new location.
- In other cases, rents increased by 50%.
- In addition, when we review the proposed regulation, one-time moving costs of \$750.00 are included. In our direct experience over the past year, moving expenses across the board cost approximately \$1,000 per unit.

For individuals on income assistance residing in these lower rent units, such a significant rent increase places them at increased vulnerability for future experiences of homelessness. Without additional support from the provincial government in the form of rent supplements or if they are lucky to find affordable housing in the community, the individuals referenced would not have been in a place to rent and may have found themselves in shelter.

Based on our experiences over the last year, CMHA Kelowna is advocating for an increase in the proposed financial compensation for tenants from 3 to 4 months. In addition, financial assistance for moving expenses be raised to \$1,000, more in line with what we have actually experienced in our day-to-day work.

Long-Term Housing Stability:

The financial assistance provided by the City does not address the long-term challenge of securing affordable housing. For many tenants, eviction due to redevelopment may lead to homelessness or displacement in more precarious living conditions, such as temporary or substandard housing. Ironically, this could lead them to the very place they started at.

CMHA Kelowna advocates an emphasis on creating more affordable and supportive housing options for all residents, particularly for those with mental health and/or addiction challenges, who often experience barriers in accessing stable housing. We are excited to see the roll out of the City's Housing Action Plan and know that a significant number of rentals will be coming online in the next two years and the consequent impact on vacancy rates and potential downward pressure on rents.

We very much appreciate the City's recognition of the challenges that tenants face when displaced due to redevelopment. We urge you to consider the additional measures

outlined above to ensure that the proposed regulation not only helps tenants in the short term but also provides the support they need to secure stable housing and maintain their mental health and well-being in the long term.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. CMHA Kelowna looks forward to continuing to work with the City to ensure a just and equitable housing environment for all residents of Kelowna

Sincerely,



Mike Gawliuk
CEO
Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Kelowna

January 16, 2025

To: City Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC, V1Y 1J4

Attention: Mayor and Council
RE: Proposed Tenant Protection Policy

Dear Mayor Dyas and Council Members,

We are writing in response to City Council's initiative regarding the Tenant Protection Regulations. The Urban Development Institute (UDI) strongly recommends that the City of Kelowna align its policies with the existing Provincial regulations established under the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA).

The RTA provides comprehensive protections for tenants, including regulations for rent increases, eviction procedures, and lease agreements. These existing measures ensure tenants are safeguarded without imposing additional layers of complexity.

Kelowna's rental market is already moving toward stabilization. As of December 2024, the vacancy rate has increased significantly to 3.8%, up from 1.3% in 2023. This trend signals a shift towards a healthier, more balanced market. Notably, over 1,000 new rental units are currently under construction, and many are expected to be completed within the next 12 to 24 months. This substantial influx of housing will likely further improve vacancy rates, potentially exceeding 4.8% under moderate demand scenarios.

The introduction of additional municipal regulations at this time would not only be redundant but could also create unintended consequences, including:

- **Increased Administrative Burden:** Adding complexity for both developers and property owners, leading to delays and higher costs.
- **Discouragement of Investment:** Unnecessary regulations may deter new rental housing projects, delaying much-needed housing supply.
- **Impact on Affordability:** Higher development costs could translate to increased rents, counteracting efforts to improve affordability.

Given these conditions, the market does not warrant further tenant protections beyond what is already provided by the RTA. Instead, the City should focus on encouraging investment in rental housing to sustain the positive trajectory of Kelowna's rental market.

We strongly urge Council to reconsider the necessity of introducing additional municipal rental protection measures. By doing so, the City can ensure policies that support both tenants and the development community while fostering a balanced, sustainable rental housing market.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and collaborate towards solutions that benefit all stakeholders in Kelowna's housing ecosystem.

Sincerely,



Charlene Thomas
Executive Director
Direct: ((250) 212 4488

CC: Ryan Smith, Nola Kilmartin, James Moore, Dave Sargent

February 4th, 2025

To: City of Kelowna
1435 Water Street
Kelowna, BC, V1Y 1J4



Attention: Mayor and Council

Subject: Need for Alignment with the Residential Tenancy Act in Tenant Protection Policies

Dear Mayor Dyas and Council Members,

As the voice of the home building industry in the Central Okanagan, the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA) Central Okanagan advocates for consistent and effective policies that promote housing development and affordability.

We commend the City of Kelowna for its proactive approach to tenant protection. However, we believe that aligning municipal policies with the existing Provincial regulations under the Residential Tenancy Act (RTA) is the most effective course of action. The RTA already provides comprehensive protections for tenants, including regulations for rent increases, eviction procedures, and lease agreements. Introducing additional municipal regulations could lead to unintended consequences, such as increased administrative burdens, discouragement of investment, and potential impacts on affordability.

Kelowna's rental market is moving toward stabilization, with the vacancy rate increasing to 3.8% in 2024, up from 1.3% in 2023. This improvement is a direct result of the substantial number of rental units currently under construction.

The solution to having stable and affordable rental units is to have more options for renters. The only way to have more options is to build more units. The key to building more rental units is to remove any regulatory burdens that could slow down or prohibit the construction of new units. In short, don't make it more difficult to build at a time where we need to make it easier.

The introduction of additional municipal regulations at this time would not only be redundant but could also create unintended consequences, including increased administrative burden, discouragement of investment, and potential impacts on affordability.

Given these conditions, the market does not warrant further tenant protections beyond what is already provided by the RTA. Instead, the City should focus on encouraging investment in rental housing to sustain the positive trajectory of Kelowna's rental market.

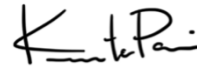
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Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and collaborate toward solutions that benefit all stakeholders in Kelowna's housing ecosystem.

Sincerely,



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