

Attachment-1 Objectives and Results Relating to Long-term Rental Housing

The following is a summary overview of the objectives set out in Report 14-29 and the corresponding results.

Proactive Enforcement

Search Warrants

Objective: As identified in the July 15, 2013 Rental Housing Licensing Cost Benefit Analysis report (13-32) staff encountered challenges in gaining access to buildings suspected of non-compliance.

Results: Building Services in conjunction with Guelph Police Services and Corporate and Community Safety developed a Search Warrant program. Building Services began executing search warrants in 2016. A total of forty (40) search warrants have been executed on twenty-three (23) properties. Search warrants are used as the final compliance method for non-complaint properties.

Streamline Enforcement Methods

Objective: Efficiencies in enforcement methods could be realized by cross-training Zoning and Property Standards Inspectors and by having them qualified to enforce the Ontario Building Code. This efficiency would prevent the need to send multiple inspectors to a single property to deal with issues most commonly found in rental accommodations.

Results: Zoning Inspectors were cross-trained and appointed as building inspectors. The ability to have one inspector perform both zoning and building functions eliminates the need for multiple inspectors to attend the same site. This assists our customers by reducing the number of inspections and allowing them to work with a single inspector to resolve any issues. Between 2014 and 2019, over 580 proactive Building Code Act violations were identified by cross-trained zoning inspectors. This improved customer service to tenants by reducing the number of inspections required and allowing them to work with one inspector to resolve multiple issues. This also created efficiencies by reducing required staff time and reducing use of resources such as vehicle use and fuel.

New Staff Resource

Objective: Improvements to tenant safety and the enhanced proactive enforcement program will be furthered by the addition of a new full-time inspector, cross-trained in zoning, property standards and the Ontario Building Code.

Result: A new resource was approved and filled in 2016 through the budget process. Statistics regarding proactive enforcement inspections are included in Attachment 2 – Proactive Enforcement Inspections.

Zero Tolerance for Repeat Offenders

Objective: A formalized process has not been established for repeat offenders.

Result: Building Services in conjunction with Legal, Prosecutions, Corporate and Community Safety and the Fire Department created the first Legal Procedures Manual and program in the City. This program outlines the system involved in using legal processes as compliance options.

Increased Set Fines

Objective: Increase set fines for Zoning, Two-Unit House Registration, Property Standards, Yard Maintenance, and Ontario Building Violations.

Result: Applications were made and subsequently approved by the Senior Regional Justice to increase set fines related to violations pursued under Part I of the Provincial Offences Act.

Monitoring

Objective: Staff are committed to the ongoing monitoring of the Building Services enhanced enforcement program to gauge effectiveness and continuously make improvements. Key performance indicators would be used to measure and monitor the progress of the proactive enforcement program and to report annually to the Planning, Building, Engineering and Environment Committee.

Result: Key performance indicators were included in Building Services Annual Report and subsequent Building Services Status Updates. Information has also been provided in Attachment 2 – Summary of Key Indicators.

Communications, Education and Community Partnerships

Objective: To collaborate with community partners and stakeholders to research and develop communications and education programs designed to promote safe legal living accommodations and discourage disruptive or disrespectful behaviour, particularly in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of rental housing.

Results: Although the funding to work with partners and stakeholders to research, develop and implement a comprehensive education/communications plan as part of the recommended approach was not funded in the 2015 budget, staff was able to initiate and participate in a several education/communication initiatives.

In partnership with the University of Guelph Off-Campus Living Office, the City developed a Tenant Safety Program in 2016. This tenant safety initiative was designed to increase tenant safety awareness and to promote the availability of free rental unit safety inspections. This program continues yearly, however has been impacted by the pandemic.

Through the Town and Gown process, there have been numerous initiatives for Education and Communications with residents and occupants of rental units. These include communications with house visits, distribution of “who to call” materials to both residents and tenants.

The city also participates at the University of Guelph’s Off-Campus Living Rental Fair and other related initiatives.

Education sessions have also been held for local real estate professionals and the city continues to look for ways to continue to provide education on safe rental housing accommodations.