

Gow's Bridge



Linking the Old University Neighbourhood to the City of Guelph since 1897

## Old University Neighbourhood Residents' Association Inc.

Members of Guelph City Council Re: Licensing of Rental Accommodation - February 2022

We are writing as the Executive of the Old University Neighbourhood Residents Association (OUNRA) – a long time Residents' Association in the Old University area of our city.

We are writing in support of the initiative to license Short-Term Rental Housing in Guelph. We feel it's a good first step. And in fact, we believe it should be extended to other forms of rental housing as well.

It is well acknowledged that there is a housing crisis, not only in Guelph, but in many communities across Canada. Housing inflation has left many people behind. Those who have dreamed about owning a house now watch that dream slip out of reach. We are told that perhaps up to 20% of housing in the city of Guelph is held by investors.

All of this, of course, also squeezes those who rent which makes the rental market even tighter and more expensive. Further, people who are feeling desperate to find any roof over their head become ripe for exploitation.

In our Old University neighbourhood, we see many rental houses that are poorly kept and in poor repair. If the inside of the house in any way reflects the lack of care that we see on the outside – we wonder about the health and safety of those who live there. We don't know – but that matter, neither does the city. And that's the problem.

Some of the best managed and most affordable rental housing – of which we have a lot of in our area – is accessory apartments. These are registered by the city. This is a one-time registration that is far from perfect – but it is a start. But again, we need more regulation.

We have appreciated our Ward 5 City Councillors, Cathy Downer and Leanne Caron who have taken the time to explore with us the issues around licensing of rental accommodation. We strongly support their amendment that is coming before City Council – urging a more proactive enforcement and education as well as the exploration of regulation for long-term rental properties.

City Council has a vital role to play in addressing the housing crisis and creating safe, healthy and affordable homes for all in our city.

Thank you for your work on behalf of the citizens of Guelph.

Sincerely,

John Lawson, President OUNRA