

## **Waterloo Region Yes in My Backyard Statement in Support of Rental Replacement Rules**

April 14, 2025

Waterloo Region Yes in My Backyard (WR YIMBY) urges Cambridge City Councillors to support the motion directing the Chief Planner to investigate a rental replacement by-law.

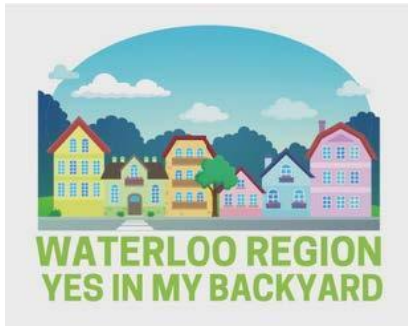
This council has already taken an important first step with the unanimous reinstatement of Demolition Control Permits to prevent demolitions of residential units - until clear development plans are in place. During those discussions in November, it was noted that Demolition Control Permits alone, are insufficient to protect the range and mix of housing types needed in this community. The next step is to explore how a Rental Replacement Policy can prevent the erosion of units which are currently below market rent.

Cambridge's Housing Needs Assessment overwhelmingly confirmed the need for rental units, particularly those which are below market rent. While we need more units overall, it is important to prevent the erosion of the units we already have, since we are currently losing (relatively) affordable units more quickly than they can be built.

The units which are most at risk for being lost to redevelopment are units which are subject to rent control. Many of them have existing tenants who pay well below market rent. No unit, which is built, without being subject to a Rental Replacement bylaw will be subject to any form of rent control, nor can developers be compelled to make up for the loss of rare rental units with 3+ bedrooms

While developers and property owners may be initially resistant to Rental Replacement Policies, they provide substantial benefits for all stakeholders. Rental replacement policies provide a transparent, predictable, and consistent set of expectations for developers. Where there are clear rules, developers can expect that if their proposals meet these obligations, their permits will be granted in a timely fashion. Additional delays related to the tenants resisting displacement, or hesitance by councillors to approve a development application are no longer a concern. It ensures that the expected cost, and timeline for having tenants leave the property is predictable from the outset.

When policies are standardized and transparent, the additional cost of compensating tenants for the loss of their unit, or being required to allow a tenant to move back into a replacement unit "as if the tenancy had not been interrupted" simply becomes a known cost of doing business.



Rental Replacement bylaws would make the case for approving any development stronger, by mitigating the biggest potential downside of redevelopment - the erosion of currently affordable housing, and the displacement of existing tenants. It is an important policy tool to provide a predictable path to re-development where there will be a substantial contribution to the number of dwelling units.

We thank you in advance for your vote to explore this policy,

Sincerely,

Lynn Intini

Waterloo Region Yes in My Backyard