THE VOICE OF THE FEDERATION OF RENTAL-HOUSING PROVIDERS OF ONTARIO

# FE

FRPO'S **FAIR EXCHANGE** OF RENTAL INDUSTRY NEWS

MARCH/APRIL 2019

LEGAL TIPS **FOR LANDLORDS**

UPDATE ON **BILL 66**

## THE HOUSING GAP

**POLICIES TO SPUR NEW DEVELOPMENT**

CFAA'S TAX **LOBBYING EFFORTS**

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FRPO'S **FAIR EXCHANGE** OF RENTAL INDUSTRY NEWS

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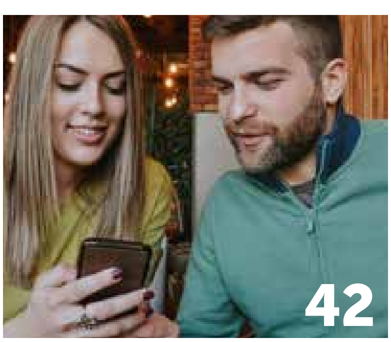


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FRPO'S **FAIR EXCHANGE** OF RENTAL INDUSTRY NEWS

The voice of the Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario

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# FRPO'S GOT YOU COVERED

This spring promises to be a busy one for FRPO and the industry. April marks the start of the annual Residential Tenancies Act Seminars. We'll be hitting the road and visiting London, Ottawa, Hamilton as well as three events taking place in the Greater Toronto area. These popular events will help keep your teams up to date on recent changes, as well as provide best practices. If you haven't signed up yet, check out our website for registration details. If you are a supplier to the industry and want a greater understanding of the legislation that governs residential tenancies, we'd encourage you to attend as well.

May will mark the CFAA's return to downtown Toronto for their annual Rental Housing Conference on May 13-15th. This conference helps to support the federal lobbying efforts, while bringing rental housing providers together from across Canada. With insightful sessions and a variety of speakers, this is a not-to-be-missed event. CFAA is also offering the always popular building tour, which gives attendees an on-the-ground look at some fantastic properties.

This month's issue focuses on a variety of topics with an emphasis on legal and regulatory themes. From the Housing Supply Action Plan, CFAA's proposed federal tax reform, Bill 66 and changes to the rules at the Landlord Tenant Board permitting some documents to be served by email, we've got you covered. We have also included an update on the #rentON public relations campaign, the CMHC Rental Market Survey as well as more information about FRPO's recently released report by Urbanation highlighting the annual shortfall of rental units. If you'd like to read the full report, please visit our website.

As always, if you wish to contribute to FE or have a story idea, don't hesitate to reach out to me at lmichal@frpo.org. Until next time, happy renting!

**LYNZI MICHAL**
Editor, FE magazine
Director of Membership & Marketing, FRPO

# ADDRESSING THE SUPPLY GAP

## Policy changes to spur new development

**TONY IRWIN**
President & CEO
FRPO

Over the past several months, FRPO has been working closely with the Ontario Government to provide solutions to address the rental housing supply crisis in the province.

The Ford government has prioritized increasing supply as the key pillar to address housing affordability in Ontario. They have sought to develop a Housing Supply Action Plan intended to create a set of policies which will spur necessary development of new housing, including rental.

FRPO has represented the industry's voice in multiple in-person consultation sessions on various aspects or barriers to developing new rental housing. We also recently submitted a robust policy paper providing the government with an updated overview of the state of our rental market, an explanation of the cost drivers that inform project feasibility, problems with the current development and rent control regime, and 24 specific policy recommendations to incent new development of rental housing and improve operating climate for rental.

FRPO commissioned Urbanation to provide us with an updated supply gap analysis, which concluded that between 70,000 and 100,000 net new rental units are required in Ontario over the coming decade. This confirms the severity of the supply problem and need for comprehensive policy changes.

We also commissioned Altus Group to help develop a baseline pro forma we can use to show the government the actual impact of their policy decisions on project feasibility. The largest cost drivers in the Toronto model of our baseline pro forma were land (26%) and government fees/charges (18%), after hard construction costs.

Our analysis ran various scenarios and found the following in terms of impacts on project development decisions: reducing development time from four years to six months can improve feasibility by 11%, eliminating land costs can improve feasibility by 28%, and increasing rental income by allowing 30% more floors can improve feasibility by 14%.

We proposed the government take an outcome-based approach in addressing the rental housing supply crisis. Basically, create a suite of policies specifically designed to spur the 70,000 to 100,000 rental units we need in the next decade to balance the market.

The full suite of policy proposals can be found in our submission posted on FRPO's website, but I'll highlight a few of the key policy proposals we submitted on behalf of our members.

### "AS-OF-RIGHT ZONING" FRAMEWORK FOR PURPOSE-BUILT RENTAL

To reduce the unnecessarily long time it takes to get projects approved, the government should provide pre-permitting through an "as-of-right" zoning framework for purpose-built rental in targeted areas to incent development where it makes policy sense.

The proposal calls for a time-limited tool that would provide the right "spark" for development to occur. It does not call for forced intensification in established single family neighbourhoods. In fact, that would be counter-productive as no government would politically be able to implement such a policy due to local resistance.

This "as-of-right" zoning framework should be limited to specific types of areas to make it more politically

palatable and drive intensification where it makes sense. Examples of those could be along higher order transit routes and around transit stations, declining retail locations like plazas, commercial avenues with strip malls like along Dundas Street in Mississauga, and under-utilized industrial lands where manufacturing will not come back.

This policy tool should only be available in select communities where the additional supply can be consumed by market demand.

### MAXIMIZING THE POTENTIAL OF "UNICORN" SITES

To help address the impact of increasing land costs, the government should create an application-based concierge program to unlock the full potential of "unicorn" sites.

Many rental housing complexes, which have multiple buildings, have room for an additional building or two. This is low-hanging fruit when it comes to getting more rental housing units onto the market. Supply could be added without incurring any land costs, incenting developers to maximize the footprint of their properties and provide much needed new supply.

However, municipal processes and approvals driven by NIMBYISM supported by neighbourhood politicians are not incented to truly capture the potential of these sites. Therefore, Ontario needs to develop a framework and a program that evaluates site-specific proposals and approves these developments through provincial authority.

### REVIEWING MUNICIPAL POLICIES THAT EMBED UNDUE COSTS IN PROJECTS

In an environment where there is a rental housing supply crisis, the provincial government must review certain municipal policies that reduce the number of units that can come onto the market.

For example, out-of-date zoning is often a driver for the misuse of Section 37 of the Planning Act. The provision was intended to allow for greater density in exchange for community benefits but artificially low zoning has resulted in it being used as a bargaining tool to get density that should be allowed to begin with.

Unreasonable parkland requirements and parking ratios are other examples. These policies need to be updated to reflect today's reality. Many individuals who live in core urban areas, especially millennials in Toronto do not own cars. High parking ratios for buildings near transit stations do not make sense and are contrary to provincial policy interests.

### IMPROVING THE OPERATING CLIMATE THAT INFORMS INVESTMENT DECISIONS

The overall operating climate for rental is a large consideration when it comes to deciding where a developer should invest in rental or other housing options.

Historically, vacancy decontrol has made rent control workable but with decreasing turnover among tenants and increase in public tension associated with seeking above-guideline increases, the fundamental dynamics that made the operating business case workable are shifting.

In order to address this shifting dynamic, FRPO has encouraged the government to improve the process for applying for above-guideline increases and to allow AGI's to cover extraordinary utility increases. The government should also move to a CPI + 2% model and eliminate the 2.5% hard cap on the rent increase guideline. In addition, the Landlord & Tenant Board requires process improvements to improve efficiency and appropriate resources to deliver on its mandate.

These are just some of the measures we have recommended to government as they look to develop their Housing Supply Action Plan.

As your voice, FRPO will continue to advance your interests to policy makers and ensure the sector has strong representation at the decision-making table.

# UPCOMING INDUSTRY EVENTS

APR 2

## 2019 RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT SEMINARS

*Apr 2, 2019 8:00am to May 2, 2019 12:00pm*

Toronto, London, Hamilton, Scarborough and Ottawa

FRPO will once again hold the ever popular Residential Tenancies Act seminars throughout April and May. In the last couple of years, there have been many changes in our industry. This year's event will focus on residential tenancies in a hot rental market. Topics include 'hot button' issues such as rent strikes, Cannabis Act impacts, renting to roommates, rules about obligations when there are floods, explosions, and fires. Additional topics include Privacy Act compliance, Human Rights Risks & Liabilities as well as the risks of "Renovictions".

We will also provide an update on how the new industry lease is holding up at the Landlord Tenant Board, changes to visitors parking, post eviction order strategies, serving NORI's by email (but watch out!) as well as social media trolling of landlords and staff. The session will conclude with a case law section dedicated to examples of recent LTB orders and Divisional Court decisions. All seminars are presented by legal experts and each attendee is provided a booklet with all materials. These events are ideal for site staff, leasing agents, property managers, owners and senior management. These events will sell out, we encourage you to register early.

**REGISTRATION FEES**

FRPO Members – $109.99 plus HST
Non-FRPO Members – $209.99 plus HST
Members of a recognized Regional Association – $159.99 (Please use your promo code)
All registrations include full breakfast from 8:00am-8:40am and seminar will take place from 8:40am-12:00pm

**EVENT DATES & LOCATIONS**

Toronto – April 2nd, Old Mill
Hamilton – April 4th, Waterfront Centre
London – April 9th, Lamplighter Inn
Ottawa – April 17th, Ottawa Event and Conference Centre
Scarborough – April 24th, Delta East
Toronto – May 2nd, Old Mill
Register today at www.frpo.org.

APR 17

## 2019 SPRING HOPE FOOD DRIVE

*Apr 17, 2019 6:30pm-9:00pm*

Ontario

Preparations are now underway for the 20th Annual Spring Hope Food Drive being held on Wednesday, April 17th from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm across the province. This event is an excellent opportunity for housing providers and residents to work together to help those less fortunate in our communities. Various landlord associations will be coordinating the food drive efforts, including FRPO, GTAA, EOLO, LPMA and HDAA. FRPO will be contacting last year's participants to update building lists. If you have not participated in the past and wish to do so, please contact Chloe Hill at events@frpo.org or 416.385.1100 extension 30.

MAY 13

## CFAA RENTAL HOUSING CONFERENCE 2019

*May 13, 2019 12:00pm to May 15, 2019 4:00pm*

Regency Hyatt - Toronto

CFAA Rental Housing Conference 2019 will be held from May 13-15 at the Hyatt Regency hotel in downtown Toronto. CFAA aims to present the most useful rental housing information possible, along with unique opportunities to network with key players and move the rental housing industry forward!

**Keynote speakers**

CFAA is pleased to announce three tremendous keynote speakers: Benjamin Tal, Murtaza Haider and Stephen Moranis.

**Registration**

Whether you are a rental housing executive, department head, manager, developer, supplier or a rental owner, you should plan to attend CFAA-RHC 2019. Early registration is now open at www.CFAA-RHC.ca.

MAY 14

## CFAA RENTAL HOUSING AWARDS DINNER

*May 14 2019*

*Hyatt Regency Hotel, Toronto*

As part of CFAA-RHC 2019, CFAA will be hosting the 4th annual Rental Housing Awards Dinner on Tuesday, May 14. To learn more about the awards program, please email awards@cfaa-fcapi.org.

**Registration**

Whether you are a rental housing executive, department head, manager, developer, supplier or a rental owner, you should plan to attend CFAA-RHC 2019. Early registration is now open at www.CFAA-RHC.ca.

JUN 26

## APARTMENTALIZE

*June 26, 2019 8:00am to June 29, 2019 2:00pm*

Denver, Colorado

Join us to Apartmentalize in Denver, Colorado, and take your career, your company and the experience your residents receive to new heights. Achieve greater success in all three areas by attending the apartment housing industry's premiere event. Register today at https://www.naahq.org/apartmentalize

*Please visit www.frpo.org regularly for newly added events.*

## GET SOCIAL WITH FRPO

@FRPOFACTS

**SEP 4**

### CANADIAN APARTMENT INVESTMENT CONFERENCE

*Sep 4, 2019 8:00am-4:00pm*

Metro Toronto Convention Centre

The Canadian Apartment Investment Conference brings together owners, managers, developers, investors and lenders to provide valuable insights into the multi-unit residential market: how to increase net asset values, and how this sector is performing. Last year's conference attracted over 700 executives interested in learning about major trends, issues, opportunities, and strategies in Canada's multi-unit residential market. Uniquely tailored, the 2019 Canadian Apartment Investment Conference program offers the greatest possible value and flexibility to owners, managers, developers, investors and lenders. The program will provide valuable insights in major theme areas by key industry leaders including:

- The Condominium and Housing Market Impact
- Legislatives Changes and Impacts
- Tenant Perspectives
- Economic Updates on a National Scale
- Capital Markets and Investment Activity
- Impact of New Developments & Intensification of Existing Sites
- Income, Operations and NAV Improvement Strategies
- New and Innovative Solutions in the Tech Space

Exceptional opportunities for networking will be available throughout this year's conference. Attendance at the Canadian Apartment Investment Conference may also qualify for various continuing education credits. The Canadian Apartment Investment Conference is organized by the producers of The Real Estate Forums, in conjunction with a steering committee of apartment owners, lenders, brokers, and valuators. In keeping with the strong reputation of the Forums, the conference will present high quality speakers on very topical issues at a relatively low registration fee. Due to the continued interest in the multi-unit residential sector from private buyers, pension funds, international investors, institutions, and publicly traded real estate entities, we are once again expecting a sold out event. We hope you will take advantage of this very informative event.

**DEC 4**

### THE BUILDINGS SHOW 2019

*Dec 4, 2019 8:00am to Dec 6, 2019 4:00pm*

Metro Toronto Convention Centre

The Buildings Show is the leader in sourcing, networking and education for the North American design, architecture, construction and real estate communities. The Show is home to Construct Canada, HomeBuilder & Renovator Expo, IIDEXCanada, PM Expo and World of Concrete Pavilion, and together they create the largest North American exposition for the entire industry. The Toronto Real Estate Forum also happens concurrently.

More than 30,500 trade professionals attend the Show annually to discover new innovations across the building industry and source the latest materials, products, tools and technologies from more than 1,600 Canadian and international exhibitors.

Through the Show's comprehensive seminar program, attendees can choose from 350+ seminars, panels, keynotes and roundtables led by a roster of 500+ industry experts and in addition tours, awards, parties and association meetings. Topics include: best practices, leadership, building codes and regulations, sustainability, new approaches to construction, technology and design trends in housing, healthcare, education, retail, workplaces, accessibility, hospitality and wellness.

**DEC 5**

### 2019 MAC AWARDS GALA

*Dec 5, 2019 5:00pm to 9:00pm*

Metro Toronto Convention Centre

The MAC Awards Gala is the most important annual event for our members and is well attended by rental housing providers ranging from hands-on managers to third party management and holding companies. This event allows us to recognize excellence in the residential rental housing industry and to advance the high standards that the Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario aims to promote. This year's gala will be held on Thursday, December 5th at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in conjunction with PM Expo and the Building Show. Join us as we honour the "best in the biz". Registration will open this fall, stay tuned for more details.

Canadian Federation of Apartment Associations
Fédération Canadienne Des Associations De Propriétaires Immobiliers

# A CLOSER LOOK AT TAXES


## CFAA's tax lobbying efforts

**BY JOHN DICKIE, PRESIDENT, CANADIAN FEDERATION OF APARTMENT ASSOCIATIONS**

While the federal government's actions on housing and mortgage financing have a significant effect on the rental housing industry, the most direct federal impact is through the income tax and GST/HST systems.

The housing affordability crisis centred in Toronto and Vancouver could well be an opening to make progress on tax issues, which have long been a priority for CFAA. As a result, CFAA engaged Len Farber, a consultant on tax policy, who was the General Director, Tax Policy Branch, at the Department of Finance from 1973 to 2005. Len's unique insight has helped to hone our tax reform message, focusing on what stands the best chance of success.

All the proposals are pitched as ways of increasing housing supply in order to improve affordability. All should benefit many landlords or developers directly, and benefit all landlords and developers indirectly by making rental housing a more attractive investment.

We need to be selective about what we ask for, since the finance officials are still opposed to any sweeping reforms, which would cost the Federal Treasury substantial amounts of money. However, various modest changes would improve the situation for many rental providers, and thus increase rental supply, addressing housing affordability.

CFAA is advocating what we understand are the three most promising tax issues:

**1.** Taking advantage of the move-up effect by reducing the GST/HST charged on new rental buildings.

**2.** Gaining active business tax treatment for rental providers to allow some deferral of recapture on sale and reinvestment, to allow investors to access the standard corporate tax rate (rather than the current high rate, which is close to 50% in most provinces), and to allow small corporate landlords to access the small business tax rate.

**3.** Clarifying and expanding the ability to claim expensive building improvement work as repairs (rather than capital improvements), even though the work provides a better item at the building than the item that was replaced (e.g. replacing mid-efficiency boilers with high efficiency boilers).

Between February 19 and 21, CFAA met with five MPs with key roles in housing and tax (from all three major parties), and also with the tax and housing policy officials in the Privy Council Office, the director of policy for the minister responsible for housing, and a key policy advisor in the office of the Minister of Finance.

Our suggestions were received with interest by all concerned, although different contacts were warmer to some of the proposals than to others. One key contact who had not been friendly to rental industry proposals in the past asked about the Capital Cost Allowance rate for rental buildings, and indicated that he would be glad to champion an increase in order to incentivize new rental supply. We will explore that further. It was a goal CFAA sought in the past. That change would improve development proformas now, while the modest decrease in tax revenue would mostly occur in the future.

The meetings were organized by Robert McCreight of the Capital Hill Group, who is CFAA's new lead external government relations person.

Now is the best time to influence the parties' election platforms. If the on-going direct membership drive continues to raise the necessary funding, CFAA will continue with Len and Robert's work throughout this summer and into the future, to solidify and advance CFAA's total lobbying efforts.

*The Federation of Rental-housing Providers of Ontario is a founding member of the Canadian Federation of Apartment Associations, the sole national organization representing the interests of Canada's $480 billion rental housing industry, which houses more than nine million Canadians.*

# MEET HELIO. THE FUTURE IS HERE

BY ANGELA SIEWERT, MARKETING MANAGER, SIFTON PROPERTIES LIMITED

Sifton Properties Limited is making history with Hēlio, a 10-storey, 115-unit apartment building under construction in the heart of West 5 and soon to be the country's most energy-efficient high rise. Designed to deliver a lifestyle of connectivity, vibrancy and convenience, Hēlio offers 150,000 square feet of luxury residential living, plus approximately 25,000 square feet of retail space on the main floor.

Hēlio delivers a lifestyle where residents can do everything in one place. A place where they can shop, work, play, live and be inspired. Enjoy the innovative and environmentally conscious design, coupled with a healthier life. Designed with both luxury and value in mind, Hēlio is the latest rental tower built by Sifton Properties Limited, boasting the finest new building amenities, set in the heart of nature.

Recently, Kate Young, Member of Parliament for London West, on behalf of Canada's Minister of Natural Resources, the Honourable Amarjeet Sohi, announced an investment of $3.9 million toward the construction of Hēlio - Canada's first mixed-

use, multi-unit residential high-rise building to target net-zero energy. Hēlio aims to demonstrate the feasibility of net-zero energy at a community level, and inspire change across Canada's construction industry. Funded through Natural Resources Canada's Energy Innovation Program, Hēlio includes a monitoring system to optimize energy-efficient performance and a valuable industry resource going forward.

"Hēlio will be the most energy-efficient high-rise in Canada, designed and constructed to be 77 percent more efficient than a similar building built under the current Ontario Building Code. This is quite an accomplishment, and there is no doubt that the Energy Innovation Program has enabled us to push Hēlio further than thought possible," says Richard Sifton, President and CEO of Sifton Properties Limited. "Our residents will enjoy modern apartment-style living in a sustainable neighbourhood, with the benefit of lower hydro bills."

"We want everyone to explore and enjoy Hēlio and its wide variety of units ranging from one bedroom up to three bedrooms. With suites ranging in size from 800 square feet to 1,800 square feet, there really is something for everyone", adds Dale Pineau, Executive Vice President of Residential and Commercial Experiences. "The active, socially aware community of West 5 offers diverse programming and the future Legacy Square will surround your new home with innovative social opportunities for children, families, singles and more."

Our first 80 families are already calling West 5 home, and many others are eager to see Hēlio come to life and be among the first to choose their suite. Contemporary cabinetry, quartz countertops, stainless steel ENERGY STAR® appliances are only the beginning. Hēlio will be wrapped in solar panels with suites offering individual hydro metering, in-suite thermostat controlled heating and air conditioning, and wireless lighting controls. The building will be equipped with electric car charging stations, bicycle storage, sensored corridor lighting, and amenities including a yoga studio, media room, gym and party lounge that overlooks Legacy Square – an outdoor space where playfulness and nature unite.

"Known as one of London's most prestigious owners, builders and landlord, Sifton Properties Limited has poured over 95 years of experience into Hēlio to create an innovative and engaging customer experience," says Brandi McIlvenny, Director of Residential Rentals. "Helio offers an uncompromising approach to our clients' needs while respecting the environment and harnessing the energy of the sun."

Hēlio is accepting interest and is scheduled to commence renting in April of 2020.

*Sifton Properties Limited is a family-owned business founded in 1923. Beginning in New Home construction, the company has since diversified into Neighbourhood Developments, Commercial Properties, Retirement Living and Residential Rentals. Sifton's mission is to "create outstanding customer experiences by building unique communities to live, work and play."*

# WHEN GOVERNMENTS REGULATE... INNOVATE!

## The risks and rewards of serving documents by email

BY JOE HOFFER

The multi-res sector is always mired in a regulatory swamp filled by all levels of government and related agencies. It is incumbent on operators of multi-res housing to stay abreast of regulatory changes and the constraints which they impose.

One recent regulatory change has been an amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Board Rules, which now permits landlords to serve some, but not all, documents by email. Landlords who inform themselves about the changes may conclude that this regulatory amendment provides a rare opportunity to realize some potential financial, administrative and customer service benefits for portfolio operations, provided a smart approach is used to ensure regulatory compliance.

Rule 3 of the LTB Rules has been amended to allow for service of certain documents by email but there are important restrictions:

- you cannot serve Notices of Termination, Notices of Hearing, Applications, Notices of Motion, and Review Requests by email (Rule 3.5);
- you may only serve permitted documents by email if the person or party receiving it has consented in writing to service by email, (Rule 3.1 (h));
- a tenant consent to service by email may be revoked at any time by giving notice in writing to the "person or party" (presumably this means the person or party to whom consent was initially given), (Rule 3.4); and,
- when serving by email, the sender must include with the email the name and telephone number (not the email address) of "a person to contact" (Rule 3.6).

It is our view that if you serve a document by email but have failed to comply with the above restrictions, then there is a high risk that the service will be deemed invalid, and this will be costly if the document is a Notice of Rent Increase (NORI) or a 24 hour Notice of Entry. The invalidity can be cured if the party serving the document can satisfy the Board that the document came to the attention of the recipient, but with email it is easy for a recipient to deny receipt ("must have accidentally deleted; must have gone to junk; etc.) or attempt to withdraw consent to service after the fact. Compliance is important for email service of documents to be valid.

So is there an upside? We think so and so do a lot of landlords. Service by email on tenants who consent to same allows landlords to serve

> The LTB has drafted a form entitled "Consent to service by Email" which is available via web browser but we recommend against using that form because it overreaches in terms of information to be provided by the landlord.

24 hour Notices of Entry, NORIs, rent receipts, LMR interest credits, and tenancy agreements/leasing documents by email. With large portfolios, landlords who commission software programs written to automatically issue annual NORIs can ensure timeliness of notice; a record of giving notice; accuracy in completion of the notice (including names of leasehold tenants, unit information and quantum of increase); and, reduce "paper" consumption and related storage costs. The potential efficiencies and cost savings are self-evident.

With 24 hour Notices of Entry, a program can be written to allow tenants, through a web browser, to "submit" a maintenance request (and maintenance requests ONLY) without the tenant having the recipient's email address but when the request is processed (including a simple email acknowledgement to the tenant and a "no reply" message) and service is scheduled, a timely Notice of Entry can be emailed back to the tenant. The name and telephone number of a "person to contact" must be included in the emailed document, but you don't have to include that person's email. A well written software program will allow the landlord (property manager) to prove receipt and processing of a proper maintenance request and proof of response to same, including proof of receipt of the Notice. A well drafted, electronic maintenance request would not allow an "occupant" to make the request (unless they falsely enter the tenant's name in the mandatory field); would not allow the document to be submitted unless all mandatory fields (including "consent" to receipt of Notice by email is given); and, would generate to the tenant a copy of the request and acknowledgment of receipt of same by the landlord. The ability to issue rent receipts and LMR interest credits by email allows for the creation of programs to ensure consistency, accuracy and proof of service across the landlord's portfolio, all without paper.

Landlords will likely review their operations to determine other benefits or risks that may accrue by implementing programs which provide for email service of a full range of operational documents while minimizing exposure to email abuse. For landlords with a "customer service" orientation, electronic communications are likely of substantial benefit. It is possible for landlords to limit a tenant's "consent in writing to service by email" to just documents that the landlord chooses as relevant for such service. We have stressed above the importance of not providing the landlord or property manager's email address. This is to ensure the landlord is given relevant operational documents without exposing landlords and property managers to thousands of irrelevant, trolling emails in their inbox.

A key requirement to service of a document by email is that "the party receiving it has consented in writing to service by email." For new tenancy agreements, a schedule may be added to a rental application with a list of the documents which the landlord wishes to serve by email together with clear "written" consent language by the tenant ("on behalf of all tenants to the rental application") to service by email. With electronic forms, the "written" requirement can be met by ensuring the box to be clicked is accompanied by language which conforms to e-commerce legislation (consistent with what you see beside the signature line on the FRPO leasing documents) as well as the email address of the tenant. Some allowance in the programming can be made to address "assignment" issues and other changes in the names of tenants to the tenancy agreement that will occur over time or situations where tenant consent is withdrawn.

What about obtaining written consent of current tenants? This will require some common sense and innovation on the part of the landlord. The LTB has drafted a form entitled "Consent to service by Email" which is available via web browser but we recommend against using that form because it overreaches in terms of information to be provided by the landlord. The form specifically allows you to check off "NORI" and Notices of Entry and the name/email of the tenant and consent must be given by the tenant. There is a fourth box which when checked would allow for service of "Communication regarding issues related to the tenancy" but that language suggests reciprocal communications which, if allowed, can result in a deluge of emails to the landlord's inbox. The LTB Consent form exceeds the requirement of the Rule because it has a field for inserting the Landlord's email, but there is no requirement that the landlord provide its email address. The LTB form also has a space for signature by both the tenant and the landlord whereas only the tenant's written consent to receipt of a document by email is legally required.

The Rule does not require that a specific "prescribed" form be used by landlords; consequently, landlords can develop their own form of tenant consent with a restricted list of documents and communications the landlord intends to serve by email (NOT Notices of Termination, etc. as prohibited by the Rule) together with the tenant's consent language. Tenant consent may be obtained a number of ways, but it does require the landlord to reach out to current tenants in some form. One option is by way of notification to all tenants of, for example, email maintenance request processing, auto rent receipt issuance, or other email notifications all through the landlord's web site. Tenants who wish to access and consent to electronic service by email could do so by completing the mandatory fields on the landlord's website and those fields would contain the full range of documents and communications which the landlord wishes to give by email. Note that service of documents by electronic communications other than "email" is not authorized by Rule 3, so "text" service of documents, for example, would not be valid. Once tenant consent is obtained, the landlord should ensure the software program is written so that every document that is intended to be legally "served" by email contains the "name and telephone number" of a person to contact.

Hopefully the information above provides a roadmap for some innovative operational programming which, when implemented, will promote administrative efficiencies, cost efficiencies, customer service benefits, and consistent compliance with RTA regulatory requirements.

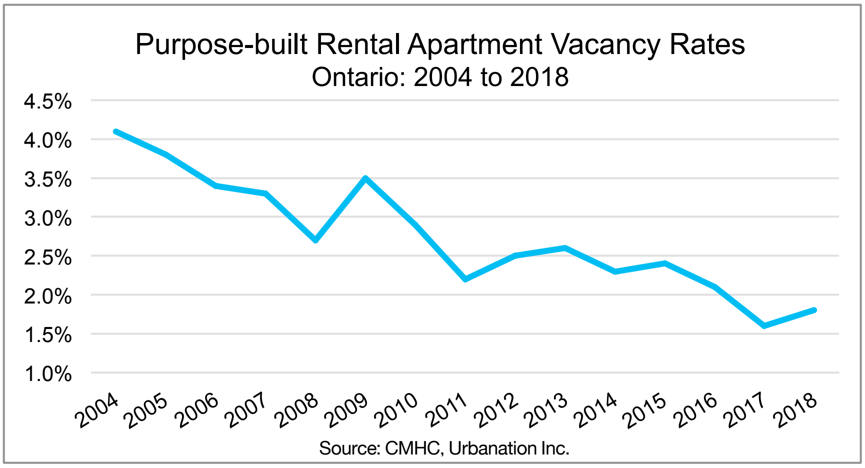
*Joe Hoffer is a Partner with Cohen Highley LLP. This article is not intended, nor shall it be taken as legal advice as it is intended to provide information to landlords.*

# DEMAND IS UP

## Ontario rental supply shortfall rises to 10,000 units per year

BY SHAUN HILDEBRAND, PRESIDENT OF URBANATION INC.

Urbanation recently updated a study for FRPO that provides a measurement of the gap between the demand for rental apartments in Ontario and the amount of rental supply expected to be delivered over the next decade from new purpose-built projects and condominiums. In the original study completed in 2017, data available at the time was used to project an annual supply deficit of approximately 6,000 units per year. The estimates factored in variables impacting demand such as economic conditions, ownership affordability, population inflows and demographic trends, and weighed them against supply indicators such as construction activity, turnover and vacancy rates. Upon updating this framework with new data in early 2019, Urbanation determined that the supply gap will increase to 9,000 to 10,000 units per year.




What's changed is pretty simple: as rental demand in Ontario continued to expand at its fastest rate in more than 40 years, supply growth dropped to a decade low in 2018. Indeed, the total net increase in purpose-built units and condos used as rentals slowed to 12,214 units, which was nearly 22,000 units less than the average rate of 33,961 renter households formed per year in the province from 2011 to 2016. Unsurprisingly, purpose-built vacancy rates remained below 2% for the second consecutive year — which hasn't occurred since 2000-2001. Despite the GTA maintaining a very high concentration of apartment development within the province, its rental market imbalance was perhaps the greatest, reporting an average vacancy rate of 1.1% for purpose-built units and 0.7% for condominiums. Within the City of Toronto, 80% of neighbourhoods had a purpose-built vacancy rate that was less than 1.5%, many of which were located in close proximity to current and planned higher-order transit.

It was also found that several small- and medium-sized markets outside the GTA posted exceptionally low vacancy, strong growing rental demand and a lack of new supply. Some of the most affected markets included Ottawa, London, Kitchener-Waterloo and Hamilton, but also often over-looked areas such as Barrie, Guelph and Peterborough. Ultimately, when you have a population growing by close to 3% per year, declining rates of homeownership, and purpose-built stock growth of only 1%, there's going to be symmetrical outcomes that extend across the entire province.

The larger and more widespread gap between demand and supply emerging in the Ontario rental market in 2018 calls for an even greater and more urgent need for new rental development. While some progress has been made in recent years towards increasing rental construction — starts and completions both surpassed 8,000 units in 2018 (the highest levels since the early 1990s) — the level of construction per capita has started to trend down again. Furthermore, secondary rentals coming from the condo market, which has generally been relied upon to supply the majority of new units, has been declining sharply as fewer investors hold their units in the long-term pool and turnover rates have fallen.

The bottom line is that purpose-built rental construction needs to more than double immediately from its current pace in order to set the market on course to become balanced. The recent removal of rent controls for new projects is a useful incentive. However, the current cost of land and development, and often lengthy approvals process continue to present very real challenges to the economic viability of introducing new rental supply. While the pipeline of development applications has shown consistent growth in recent years, it remains insufficient to meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's renter population in Ontario.

*Shaun Hildebrand serves as Senior Vice President of Urbanation Inc. Mr. Hildebrand leads the team at Urbanation, setting the research agenda and guiding the analytics that form Urbanation's market insights. He has acted as a key spokesperson for the real estate industry for several years, providing regular commentary to the media, delivering presentations at numerous events and preparing research and forecast reports to a wide variety of stakeholders.*

# SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

## How to execute a strategy that works

BY BARBARA BALLINGER

More companies today are seeing the wisdom of using social media influencers and are adding this tool to their marketing strategy to attract and retain renters, and to promote events.

"Influencers help our company be accessible to prospects, residents, and employees through real-time communication," says Tammy Yeargan, Director of Marketing for Fogelman, a property investment and management firm headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee.

Companies also use influencers to help build a convincing lifestyle brand, says Barrie L. Nichols, Vice President, Leasing and Marketing at Michaels Student Living. "For example, influencers can share how certain housing for college students might help make their life easier with nice places to study, unwind and even prepare healthy meals," Nichols says.

But who's best suited to influence, what might they share, and how are they rewarded varies greatly according to each market's competitiveness, the demographic(s) targeted and a company's marketing budget.

Some community managers find it works best to hire third-party companies that have had greater experience. For that reason, many seek experts, such as TFLiving, based in Pawleys Island, S.C., which was started three years ago to curate amenity experiences and services for building owners and property managers. It now has clients in 27 states and at 230 locations, and it shares many of its marketing campaign results on social media.

For example, TFLiving hired social media star, fitness guru and author Alex Silver-Fagan, who has 100,000 followers, to showcase a gym that had been renovated in a building in New York's hip Chelsea neighbourhood. "She tagged herself at the property, created a story, and posted it on Instagram for her followers to see, which helped the building attract traffic," CEO Devin Wirt says.

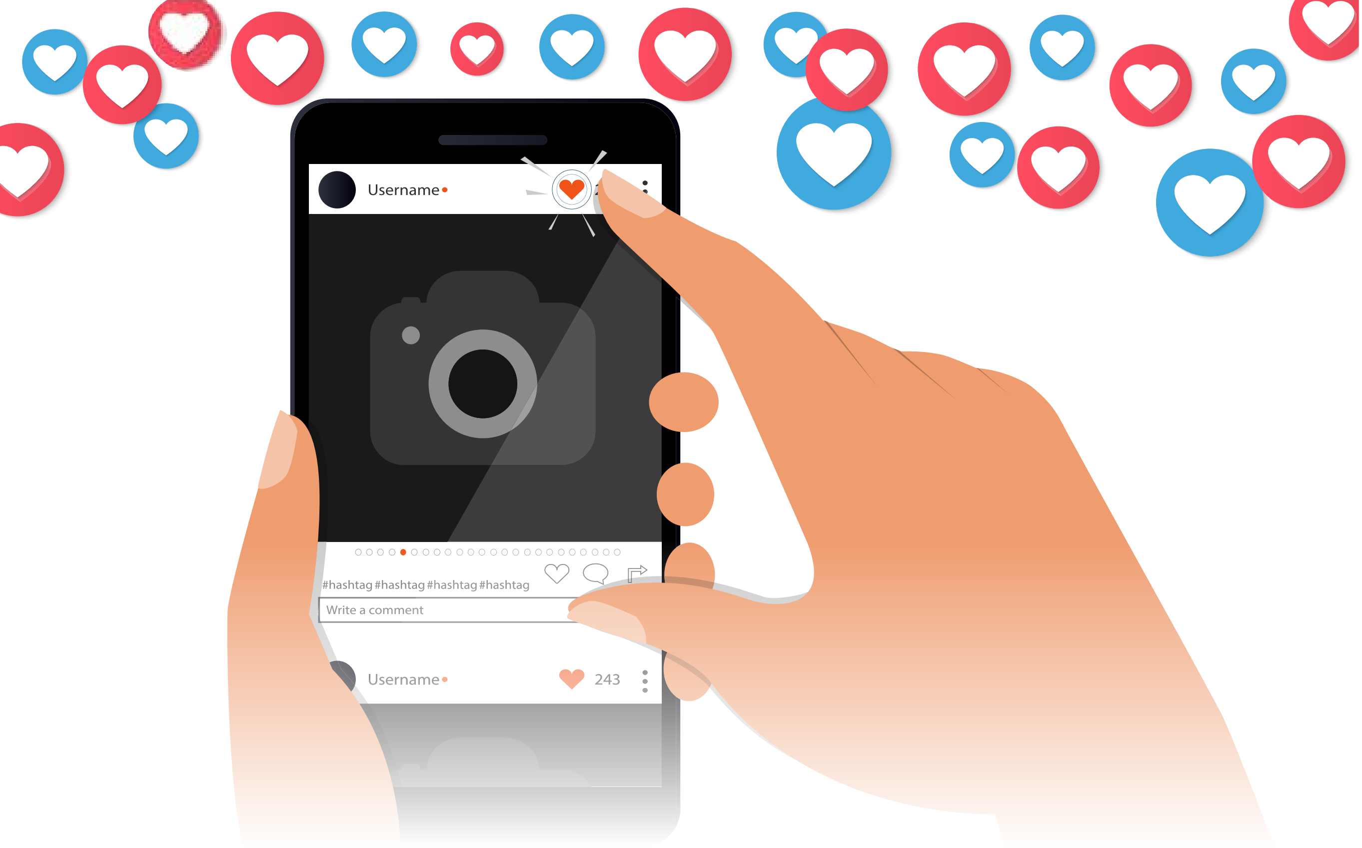
Some managers prefer the non-celeb route and go directly to influencers who rent in their building. The resident might tout a gym where they regularly work out or a swimming pool or fire pit where they unwind. Research shows that this type of more personalized, authentic approach may work better. "Students want to hear from other students. They want local relevant content and using their own influencers at the property is a great way to generate user-generated content (UGC)," says Nichols.

Numbers back her up. "UGC posts shared to social channels see a 28-percent higher engagement rate than standard brand posts, according to ComScore," Nichols says. "We see this at Michaels Student Living on a daily basis. Also, videos created by (and featuring) users get 10 times more views on YouTube than content created by brands, according to Emarsys."

Sometimes, Michaels hires an outside company to find the on-site influencers.

Not all influencers are Millennials. Yeargan's company has found that Baby Boomers can be good candidates, depending on a building's makeup and if they're savvy social media posters. Fogelman used Boomer influencers at its Edison apartment building in Fort Myers, Fla.

While the specifics may differ, consider certain common denominators to pursue this strategy:




### KNOW YOUR BUILDING.

Not all buildings are worthwhile candidates for social media influencers. Mike Zucker, who owns and manages Peak Properties in Chicago, which has 7,500 units throughout the city's many neighbourhoods, says his typical buildings are low-rise courtyard- or walk-up-style buildings rather than downtown high rises with lots of brick-and-mortar and experiential amenities. They rent well to working-class folks without social media hype because of their location and affordability. "We haven't needed resident influencers or well-known personalities," Zucker says.

### FIND THE BEST INFLUENCERS.

Generally, that means those with a following of at least 10,000 fans, says Yeargan, adding, "The more the better." Fewer can still help, but not as much and they are referred to as "microinfluencers."

### MAKE CONTACT.

Reach out by phone, text or email after they've lived on-site for several months, so they know what they like best. Meet in person, maybe over lunch or coffee. Share what you're interested in having pitched, even presenting a script. Ask what they feel comfortable promoting. Be sure they're aligned with your brand and what it represents, Nichols says.

### SET SPECIFIC GOALS.

Share how often you want them to post—i.e. perhaps, once a week.

### OFFER A REWARD.

Most influencers expect something in exchange for their efforts, such as a gift card or a free training session at the building's gym. "We've seen a lot of young people graduate from high school and college and look for ways to make money, and this is one way," Yeargan says. Yet, some influences are simply interested in posting to gain more followers themselves or because they believe in your brand or like their building, according to Nichols. Still she says it may be wise to offer something in exchange, such as a free pizza party.

### RAMP UP A COMPETITIVE SPIRIT.

You might engage more residents by turning the request into a competition and giving the winner a reward, Wirt says.

### FOLLOW UP.

Decide what you feel works best and if you want to make changes. If negative comments are posted, quickly remove them, which is something you can do easily on your Instagram and FB pages but can't do as readily on review sites, such as Yelp.

### TRACK RESULTS.

Different media tools can track Instagram posts, according to Agency Analytics. "If all is working well, you should see increased social media traffic and get more followers for your property's pages," says Wirt. However, having postings translate into sales and rentals takes time.

When a building isn't yet completed, there are other ways to use influencers. When Yeargan's company's Riverttop Apartment Homes building in West Nashville had a six-month delayed opening, it used neighbourhood influencers to help increase awareness. The company decided one of the building's top advantages was its view from its hilltop perch, which led to the idea of finding photographers who would tweet and post about the location as a great wedding venue, Yeargan says. Now that residents are moving in, the company may switch to using in-house residential influencers, she says.

Fogelman has also found that it's been successful in bartering services. "We've done trades with radio stations and other media—asking them to tout a building and giving a rental discount or hosting an event onsite in exchange," she says.

The good news is that the role of influencers is only likely to increase. "We're in the digital age and everyone seems to like the idea of on-demand experiences, which can help drive traffic to one community rather than another," Wirt says.

*Reprinted with permission from NAA*


# A DRIVE FOR HOPE

## Rental housing providers and residents working together

BY LYNZI MICHAL

This year marks the 20th Annual Spring H.O.P.E Food Drive which will take place on Wednesday, April 17th throughout the province. On-site staff and volunteers will be going door to door to collect non-perishable food items from 6:30-9:30 p.m. in hundreds of apartment buildings in over 40 cities in Ontario. This initiative significantly helps stock the shelves of local food banks and has provided hundreds of thousands of pounds of food since its inception. It also provides a fantastic opportunity for residents and housing providers to give back to their communities.

This year's food drive is being organized by FRPO, as well as several regional associations including the Greater Toronto Apartment Association (GTAA), Eastern Ontario Landlord Organization (EOLO), London Property Management Association (LPMA) and Hamilton District Apartment Association (HDAA).

Did you know that Ontario Food Bank's serve over half a million people each year? The '2018 Hunger Report' has found that 33% of individuals that use the services of food banks are children, 32% of individuals have disabilities and 5% are seniors. The largest growing segment is seniors with 25% of seniors making 12 trips to a food bank in 2018. Seniors are twice as likely to need ongoing support from food banks. The Ontario Association of Food Banks estimates that the number of seniors in need is actually higher given the stigma around asking for help and other barriers that may prevent them from accessing a food bank.

Additionally, 1 in 8 households in our country is food insecure meaning that the family has inadequate access to food due to financial strains. This figure amounts to over 4 million Canadians suffering the negative effects of hunger including physical, mental and social health issues.

Bonnie Hoy commented on the initiative as one of the founding members of the Spring H.O.P.E Drive.

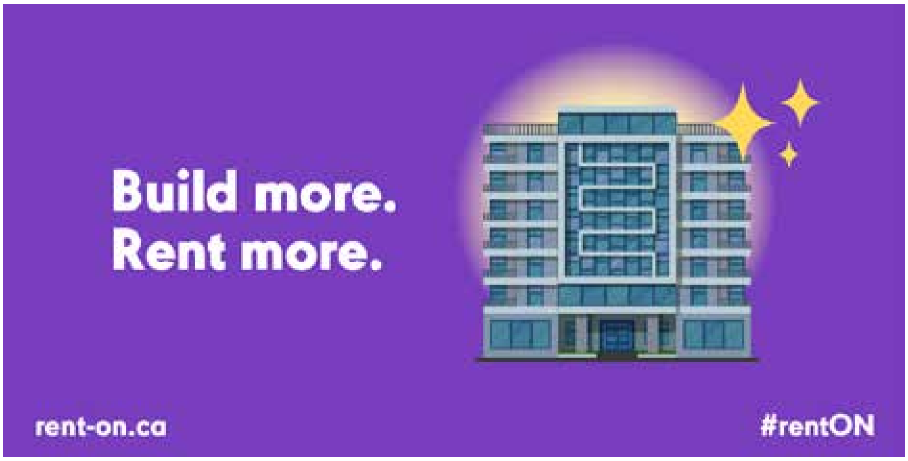
"It's hard to believe that after twenty years, we still need food banks in this country," she said. "It's an unfortunate reality. In turn, it's heartwarming to see landlords and residents working together to make a small difference for those in need."

*For more information on how to get involved with the Spring H.O.P.E Food drive or to sign up your buildings, please contact FRPO at 416 385 1100 extension 30 or chill@frpo.org. Together we can make a difference.*

# FRPO'S #rentON MOVEMENT

## A call for meaningful change

BY LYNZI MICHAL





With Ontario's rental housing supply remaining at a critically low level, FRPO remains steadfast in advocating for rental-housing providers and developing solutions to Ontario's crisis.

Rental demand in Ontario has continued to expand at its fastest rate in more than 40 years. In contrast, supply of purpose-built rentals and condominiums that will enter the rental pool declined to a decade low in 2018. Unsurprisingly, purpose-built vacancy rates remained below 2% for the second consecutive year – which hasn't occurred since 2000-2001 – and vacancy rates for condominium rentals stayed below 1%.

A healthy rental vacancy rate is considered to be 3% or higher. We're nowhere near that – in fact, these are historically low numbers.

For several decades, very little new rental housing has been built in Ontario. About 83 per cent of purpose-built rental units in Ontario were built before 1980. Just 7 per cent have been built since 2000 – and in Toronto that falls to less than 4 per cent.

A new Urbanation report states with housing price drops, mortgage rules and other housing market challenges, over the past year, the gap has now increased to 9,000 to 10,000 units per


year that are needed to meet the demand each year for the next decade.

The essential question is, how do we keep vacancy rates from getting worse and bring them close to the 3 per cent level or greater?

The supply gap is partly a byproduct of success. Ontario continues to have strong job growth and a 30-year low unemployment rate, with record high population inflows to the province from young working adults, and a sharp reduction in homeownership demand caused by high prices, rising interest rates and tighter lending rules.

But the gap is also very much a result of failed government policies at all levels, as FRPO has long documented.

The Ford government's removal of rent control for new projects completed after November 15, 2018 was a very positive step to correct an ill-considered measure by the previous administration.

Still, regulatory costs and lengthy approval processes continue to present challenges. Without meaningful change, we will not be able to address the rental-housing crisis.

For supply to meet demand, further policy changes are required. Municipalities need to freeze or reduce development charges. Governments need to find ways to make more land available. Tax policies need to support rental housing. The rent control system must ensure rental-housing providers can afford capital expenditures that preserve buildings.

It is in everyone's interest to increase rental housing supply – for renters, for buyers, and for governments.

We invite FRPO members to continue promoting the Rent ON movement and help us get the word out as we continue to drive our message on the need for more affordable rental housing.

*To learn more, visit www.rent-on.ca or join the conversation on social media using the hashtag #rentON.*

# RENTAL FACTS & FINDINGS

## Key takeaways from CMHC's annual rental market breakfast event

BY ANGELINA RITACCO, CMHC

300 GTAA and FRPO members attended this year's CMHC Rental Market breakfast event on February 14 at the Old Mill Inn in Toronto. CMHC's Ontario Economist, Ted Tsiakopoulos and Toronto Manager of Market Analysis, Dana Senagama provided insight and analysis of the Ontario and Greater Toronto Area (GTA) rental markets.

### ALMOST HALF OF ONTARIO CENTRES POSTED STABLE VACANCY RATES

According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Rental Market Survey, Ontario vacancy rates stood at 1.8% in the fall of 2018, up slightly since 2017. The increase in the primary rental universe was stronger than the increase in the occupied stock - resulting in slightly higher apartment vacancy rates.

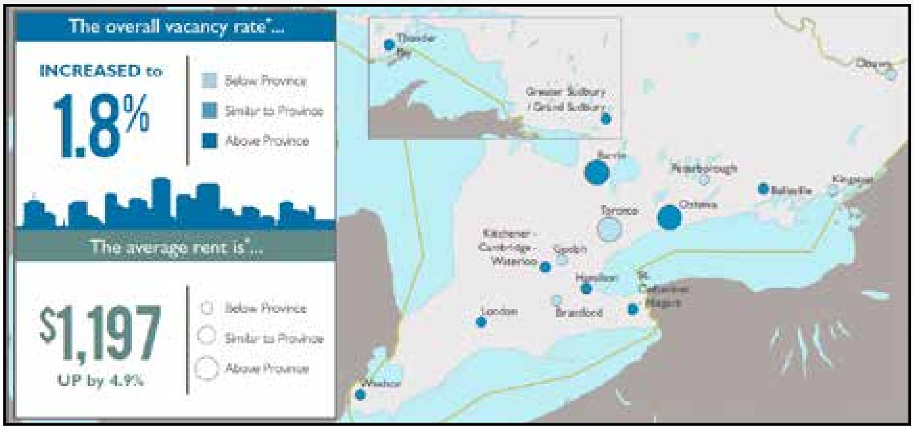
"An improving job market, eroding ownership affordability and high levels of international migration kept the Ontario vacancy rate near historic lows in 2018," said CMHC Regional Economist Ted Tsiakipoulos.

Most urban centres posted stable vacancy rates. Greater Sudbury and Kingston bucked the provincial trend by being the only markets posting a significant drop in rental vacancy rates while Thunder Bay, Kitchener and St. Catharines-Niagara posted the biggest increase in vacancy rates. Kingston, Toronto and Guelph registered the lowest vacancy rates across the province.

### GROWTH IN RENTAL SUPPLY OUTPACES STRONG RENTAL DEMAND

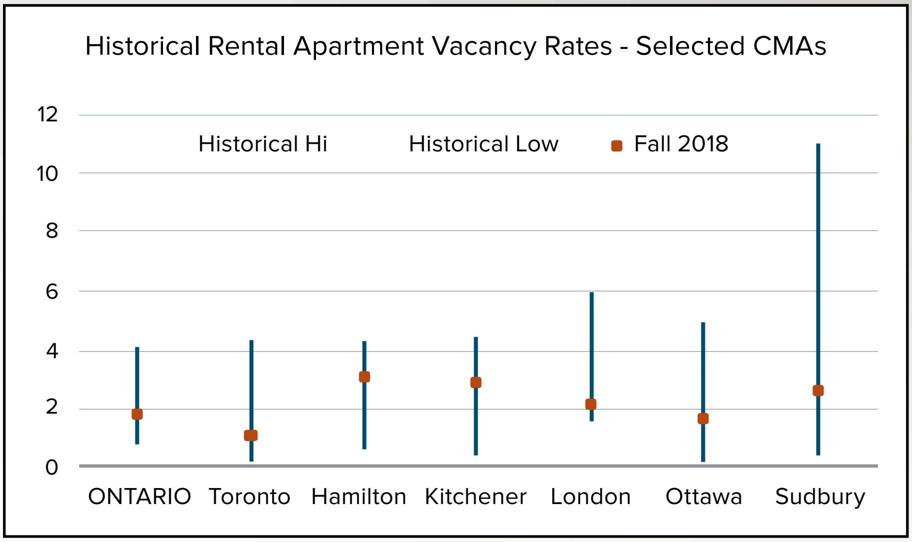
Several factors added to rental demand and exerted downward pressure on vacancy rates. Less accommodating mortgage market conditions faced by prospective first time buyers was a factor supporting rental demand. Despite softening single detached home prices

**CMHC 2018 Ontario Rental Market Report Highlights**




since this time last year, the rise in condominium unit prices which is a relatively affordable option for first time buyers exerted upward pressure on the cost gap between owning and renting. Rising home prices combined with an increase in mortgage qualification rates, pushed the share of first time buyers in Ontario close to a decade low.

Ontario`s job market is still feeling the positive effects of an economic expansion which is maturing and into its eighth year. Ontario employment levels are on track to grow at one of the strongest rates during the post-recession period. Given the Ontario rental market is pro-cyclical, a four decade low unemployment rate has boosted rental demand and exerted downward pressure on rental vacancy rates.




*Source: CMHC Fall Rental Market Survey*

Since last fall, job creation was exceptionally strong particularly for households aged 25 to 44. The largest pool of Ontario renter households fall in this age category. Consequently, when job markets improve this helps landlords retain existing tenants in the face of rising ownership costs and contributes to additional renter household formation by those able to decouple from the family home.

Ontario`s population continued to grow above historical averages – further supporting rental demand in 2018. Roughly three quarters of growth in Ontario`s population is driven by migration. Federal international migration targets have been raised in recent years.

Ontario captured a growing share of immigrants with levels hitting highs not seen since early 2000s. Immigrants lack the savings, job and credit history required for mortgage financing. As such, about two thirds move

## Seminar Highlights







into rental accommodation immediately upon arrival in Canada. Besides permanent immigrants, Ontario also registered strong growth in non-permanent residents which includes international students and temporary workers. Due to the temporary nature of their status, non-permanent residents typically live in rental accommodation.

Other factors exerted upward pressure on vacancy rates. Young adults aged 15 to 24 have a higher propensity to rent. Economic and demographic factors have created headwinds for this age cohort in recent years. A combination of higher debt service costs, rising inflation adjusted rents and modest job growth have prevented some young adults from leaving their parental home. In fact, the occupied stock for primary rental units charging the least expensive rents, grew modestly this year in relation to recent years. Furthermore, population levels among young adults have hit a plateau during this post 2015 period – further restraining household formation rates.

Declining rental vacancy rates in recent years, encouraged more investment activity in the new construction market, resulting in more primary and secondary rental completions during the current year. Oshawa, Kitchener and Guelph registered the strongest increases in the primary rental universe, growing well above the provincial rate.

In addition, condominium apartment completions, some of which are owned by investors, rose from this time last year, exerting upward pressure on the condo rental universe. This increase was more pronounced in Toronto resulting in declining competing demand for more expensive primary units. Historically, both new primary and secondary rental units added to the rental stock compete with newer existing units in the primary market that charge comparable average rents.

### TURNOVER RATES TREND LOWER

The Ontario turnover rate continued to trend lower reaching 14.9% in the fall of 2018, down from 18.3% in 2017. The turnover rate measures the share of units changing occupancy in the past 12 months. The majority of Ontario markets saw turnover rates decline.

Turnover rates remained above provincial averages in Kingston, London, and Kitchener – home to university students who are more mobile. Meanwhile, the GTA and Thunder Bay posted turnover rates well below provincial averages.

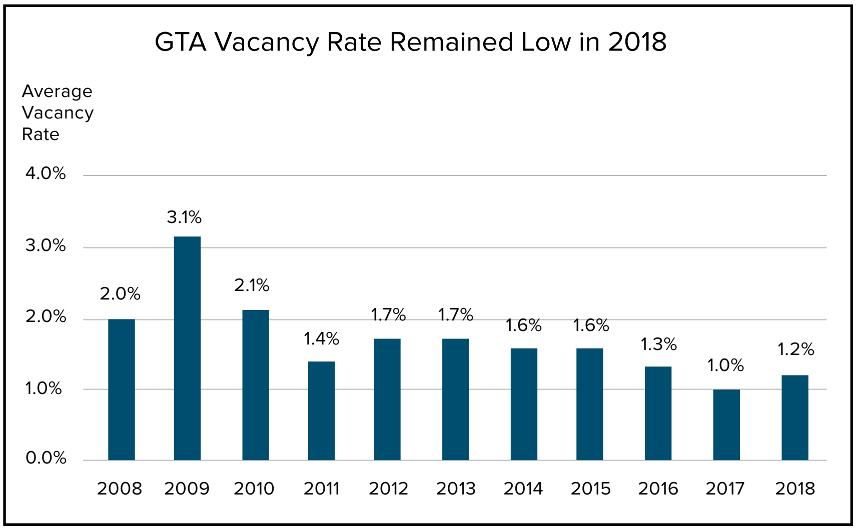
Lower first-time buyer activity and less choice restrained mobility among existing tenants in the more expensive Toronto and neighbouring markets as did an aging population, particularly in Thunder Bay. With asking rents on vacant units trading at a significant premium above occupied unit rents – few tenants were encouraged to vacate their existing unit.

### ONTARIO COMMON SAMPLE RENTS GREW BY 4.9% IN 2018

Apartment rents for all structures that were common to both 2017 and 2018 fall surveys rose by 4.9%, up from 3.8% in 2017. This rate of growth far outpaced the provincial rent review guideline amount and the cost of living index.

Historically low vacancy rates and stronger income growth exerted upward pressures on rents. Fixed sample apartment 2-bedroom rents grew above provincial averages in select eastern Ontario markets while growing below average in northern Ontario communities that posted more modest economic growth in recent years.

In Toronto, apartment rents grew above provincial guideline amounts despite turnover rates remaining below provincial averages. Toronto continues to post vacancy rates that




*Source: CMHC Fall Rental Market Survey*

are near historic lows – providing greater pricing power for units that are vacated as evidenced by high asking rents.

## GTA VACANCY RATES TO STAY LOW

The lack of a significant increase in purpose-built rental unit completions, rising costs of homeownership and a growing renter population, comprised of millennials and new immigrants will fuel strong rental demand and keep vacancy rates low over the forecast horizon. Rising costs of homeownership will force more renters to delay their entry into the homeownership market.

"With vacancy rates expected to remain at historically low levels, landlords will continue to have an upper hand in dictating rents," said Dana Senagama, CMHC, Manager, GTA Market Analysis. "Therefore, expect rent levels to be high over the forecast horizon."

More rental completions are expected to materialise over the next two years and provide some relief to the GTA's supply-strapped rental market and a slight easing of the vacancy rate is expected as a result in 2020.

However, given the propensity of building activity to be strongly skewed towards condominium apartments, it is unlikely that a substantial amount of purpose-built rental units will start construction and reach completion to significantly increase the average vacancy rate over the forecast horizon. Additionally, higher than expected immigration and further eroding affordability could accentuate the downside risk to the forecast.

*For more information, on CMHC's Rental Market Reports or housing information visit us at www.cmhc.ca. To take advantage of CMHC's Mortgage Loan Insurance, contact Graeme Huycke, Senior Specialist, Client Relations, Ontario Multi-Unit Underwriting at 416-250-2705 or via e-mail at ghuycke@cmhc.ca.*

# MOVE YOUR CAREER FORWARD

## CFAA Rental Housing Conference 2019

CFAA Rental Housing Conference 2019 will take place from May 13 to 15, 2019, at the Hyatt Regency hotel in downtown Toronto. Act now: early registration rates may still be available at www.CFAA-RHC.ca.

### CFAA-RHC 2019 - SCHEDULE IN BRIEF

**Mon, May 13**
Building Innovations Tour
Welcome Reception

**Tues, May 14**
Benjamin Tal
Executive Round Table
9 Breakout sessions
Awards Dinner

**Wed, May 15**
Greg Millen
Murtaza Haider and Stephen Moranis
11 Breakout sessions

### THIS YEAR'S KEYNOTE SPEAKERS WILL BE:

- **Benjamin Tal,** CIBC World markets, on the World economy and what it means for Canada;
- **Murtaza Haider and Stephen Moranis,** authors of the Haider-Moranis Bulletin, on key rental development issues;
- **Greg Millen,** NHL commentator and Leadership educator.

CFAA - RHC 2019 will offer breakout sessions in the following streams: technology, tenant relations, rental development, rental markets, human resources, marketing and leadership.

### SOME SAMPLE TOPICS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

**Artificial intelligence:** What is it? Where is it advancing the fastest? What will it mean for rental housing?
**Internet of Things:** What is it? Where is it advancing the fastest? What impact is it having on rental housing? What will the future hold?
**The benefit to existing owners of encouraging new purpose-built rental:** How and why existing rental owners benefit from encouraging new rental development.
**U.S. rental data and analysis:** What new information is available through CFAA's new partnership with the National Apartment Association? What can we learn from that to apply to Canadian markets?
**Canadian rental markets:** Looking at some key markets, what can we glean now from the CMHC rental market reports, and other CMHC data which is available? How do we go far beyond the vacancy and average rent increases?
**Steps to Success:** How some leaders in our industry advanced their careers from humble beginnings.
**Top new marketing trends:** Where is rental marketing going, both in the digital world and in the non-digital world? (One session on each).
**Other topics will include:** Employment Law Update; Operations Round Table; Serving the Tenants of Today; Building Communities within Rental Communities; Revenue Management; Energy Retrofits and Influencing Government.

Whether you are a rental housing executive or manager, a hands-on owner or a rental industry supplier, there will be great information, ideas and contacts for you at CFAA Rental Housing Conference 2019. Come meet with other engaged individuals in the rental housing industry, exchange ideas and see how we benefit from working together.

*For more information, or to register for CFAA-RHC 2019, please visit www.CFAA-RHC.ca. Act soon to ensure your place!*

# CFAA Building Innovations Tour

CFAA is delighted to announce that "The Selby", a new 52-storey purpose-built rental tower by Tricon House, will be showcased in the CFAA Building Innovations Tour on May 13, as part of CFAA Rental Housing Conference 2019.

The Selby is located at 25 Selby Street, nestled amongst four of Toronto's favourite neighbourhoods: Cabbagetown, Yorkville, Rosedale, and the Danforth.

The building consists of 502 apartments, with a suite mix of 56% one-bedrooms, 37% two-bedrooms and 7% three-bedrooms. One-bedroom apartments range from 524 to 603 sq. ft.; two-bedrooms from 821 to 874 sq. ft.; and three-bedrooms are 1093 sq. ft.

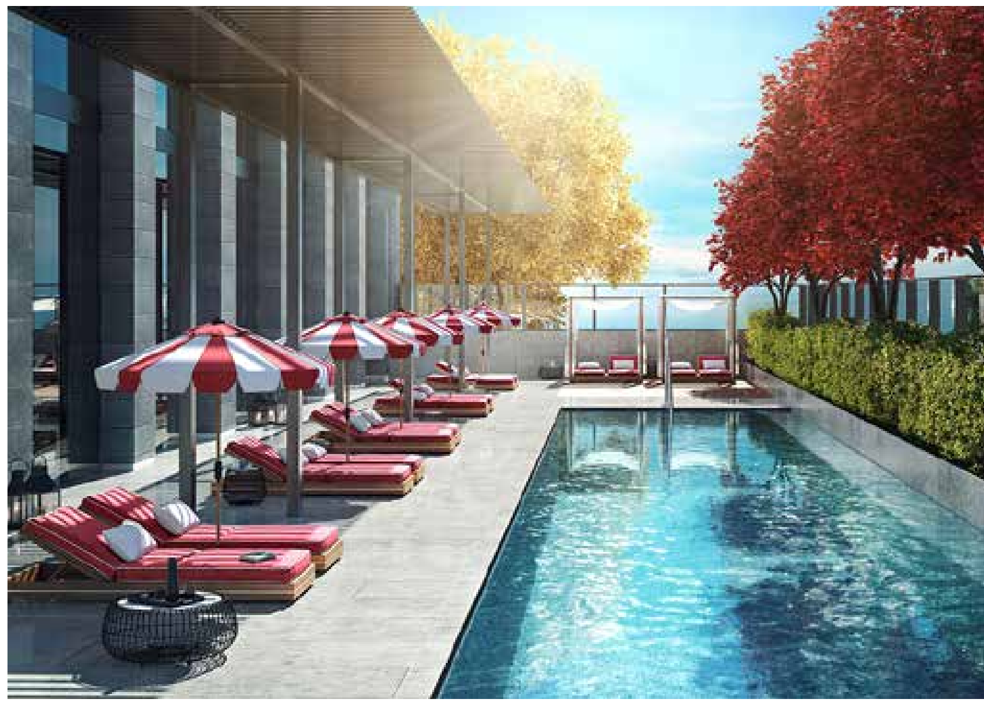
**Building features:**

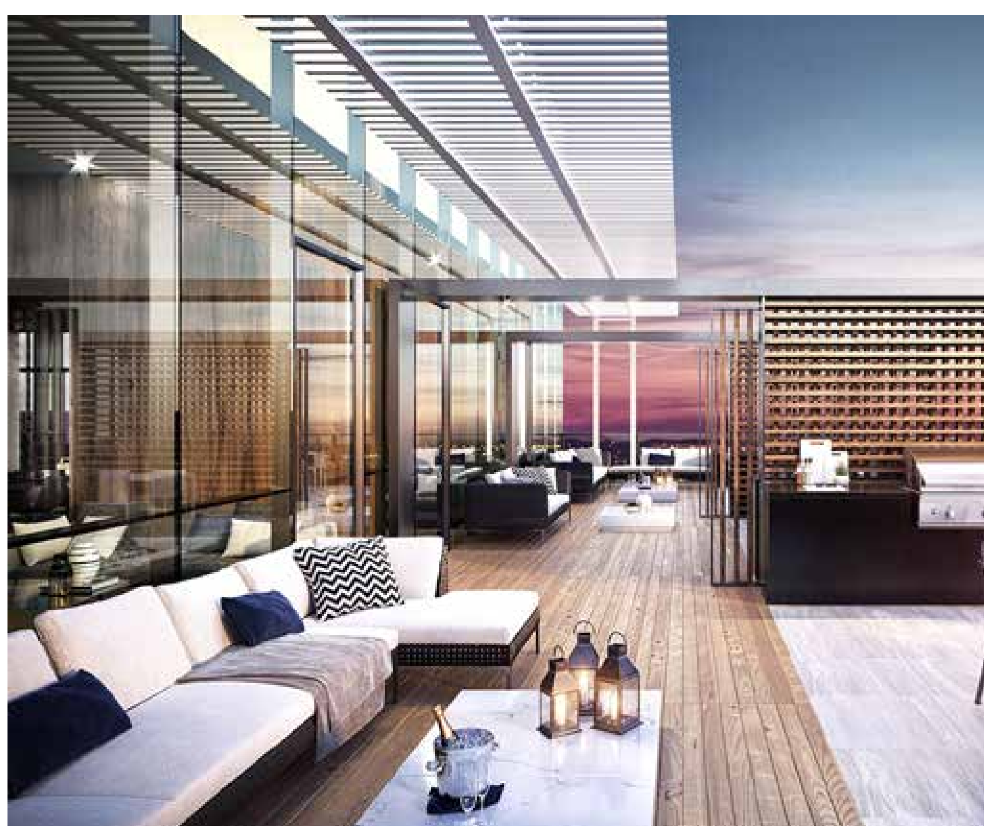
- 3,500 sq. ft. state-of-the-art gym and yoga/ spinning studio by BioSteel
- Outdoor kitchen and lounge
- Outdoor pool and deck terrace
- Spa with wet dry sauna, deluge showers and meditation area
- Games room and clubroom
- Private theatre
- 24 hour parcel lockers
- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Dog spa with grooming area
- Underground resident and visitor parking
- Stylish co-working space
- Biking and walking paths
- On-site café, bistro, bar and lounge called "Maison Selby" by Oliver & Bonacini
- On-site Concierge

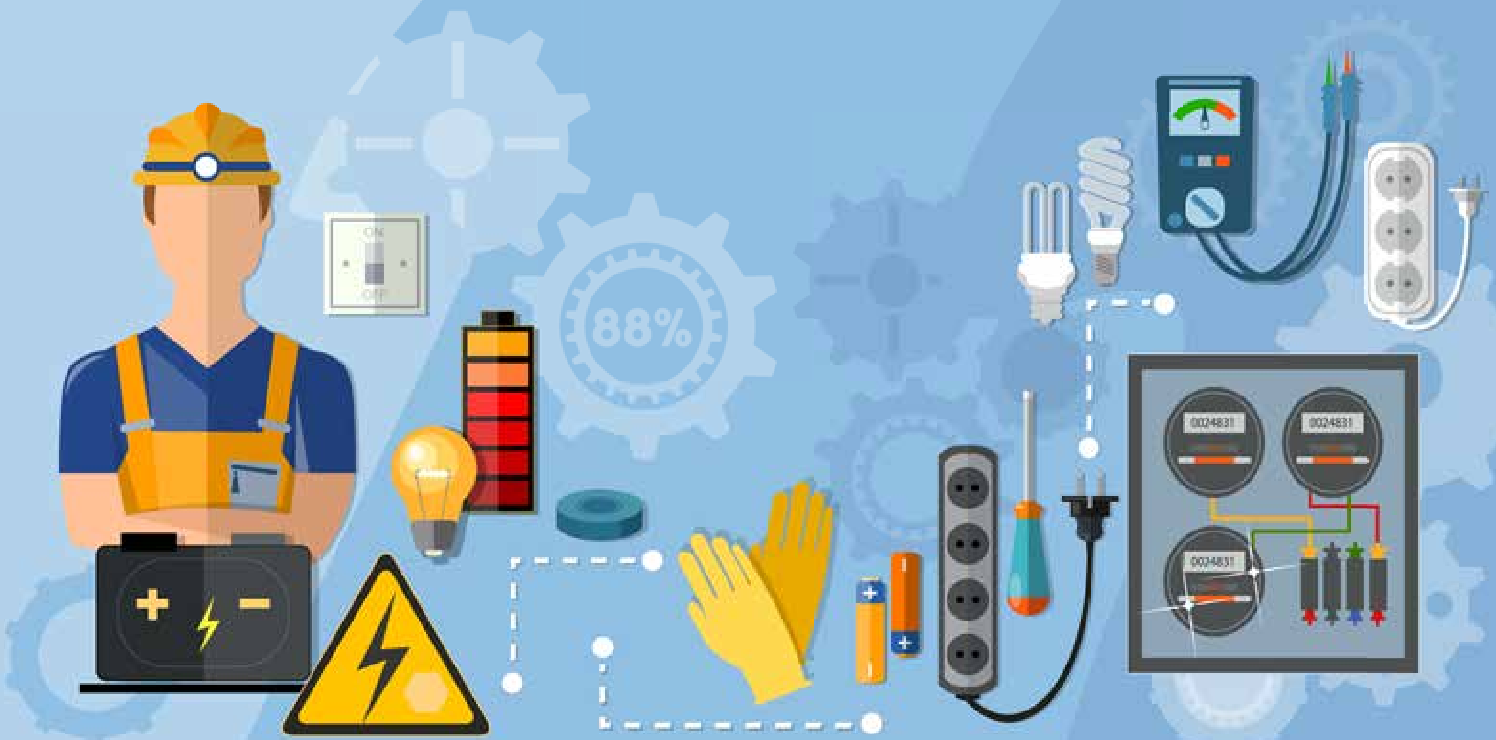
*For more information about The Selby, visit https://triconhouse.com/theselby/.*

*Also on the tour will be The Livmore by GWLRA. For more information about The Livmore, visit thelivmore.com/.*

*To register for CFAA- RHC 2019, and the Building tour, visit www.CFAA-RHC.ca*








# THE 4-1-1 ON BILL 66

## Addressing changes to the Ontario submetering industry

BY PETER MILLS

Bill 66 is a different kind of legislation than what we've become accustomed to in Ontario's multi-residential community. Following years of ever-increasing regulatory requirements, this government has ushered in a new collaborative approach to solve one of the defining challenges of our time: securing an affordable place to live on a planet that's still green enough to call home.

Submetering is the most effective energy management tool deployable in multi-residential buildings, which is why it became part of the Bill 66 conversation in the first place. Since 2010, the competitive submetering industry has flourished under the most advanced regulatory regime in Canada. Customers have benefitted from lower total electricity bills and superior services as compared to the local distribution companies. Why change that? A repeal of the Ontario Energy Board's authority to set electricity rates for sub-metered units in multi-residential buildings is among amendments to several provincial statutes introduced in Bill 66, the proposed Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act.

**The Backstory**

Throughout 2018, licenced Unit Sub-Meter Providers (USMPs) in Ontario proactively participated in an industry-wide audit by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB). This audit was initiated by the former Liberal Government with the intent of regulating administration charges by USMPs. By April 1, 2018 amendments had been made to the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998 (ACT) that gave authority to the OEB to regulate what USMPs were charging for submetering services. However, after a detailed review of the current regulatory framework and case studies of submetering savings, as well as an influx of convincing opposition letters and initiatives, the government came to the conclusion that these regulations would place a significant regulatory burden on all USMPs, incurring an estimated $1.3 million per year in additional costs directly to residents. OEB regulation of USMP fees would also lower competition and therefore investment in the industry. As a result, by December 18, 2018 the PC Government announced that “Ontario’s Government for the People is taking action to create jobs by eliminating red tape and burdensome regulations so businesses can grow, create and protect good jobs.”

Once licensed by the OEB, USMPs must adhere to the code of conduct, as explicitly prescribed under the Unit Submetering Code. “The Code” prescribes conduct that USMPs must follow, as related to: installation, verification of meters, opening and closing new accounts, transferring accounts from one USMP to another, connections and disconnections, security deposits, tampering, billing consumers, recordkeeping, and application of provincial programs. There are also other regulatory bodies and/or legislation which provide additional guidelines for USMPs to comply within the submetering industry, including: Measurement Canada, privacy acts and regulations, Electrical Safety Authority and individual municipal regulations. A common misconception is that none of the USMPs electricity charges are regulated by the OEB, when in fact electricity rates for sub-metered units are comprised of several energy charge components, many of which are OEB-regulated, as demonstrated in Table 1.

As mentioned above, as a result of Bill 132, the Fair Hydro Act, 2017, the OEB had initiated a review of the non-regulated USMPs charge with the intent of introducing further regulations on this individual component of the electricity bill, thus removing the only remaining component open to competition. Bill 66 rescinds this proposed regulation, but does not rescind the other OEB-regulated components shown above. The Ontario government came to a researched decision that the existing OEB regulatory measures were working well, and that over-regulating the industry would ultimately only hurt the consumer. With thirty licensed USMPs in Ontario competing with each other as well as LDCs, this naturally drives down USMPs charges for unit submetering services.

**Table 1: Typical electricity charges for a multi-residential sub-metered unit consist of these main components:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1. Energy Charge** | OEB regulated – i.e. RPP rates (Time-of-use or tiered rates) |
| **2. Delivery Charge** (this line item has multiple components) | OEB regulated – All transmission charges i.e. Hydro One<br>OEB regulated – All Local Distribution Company distribution charges i.e. Toronto Hydro<br>Non-OEB regulated* – USMP charge for unit sub-metering services |
| **3. Regulatory Charges** | OEB regulated – as may be required |
| **4. Debt Retirement Charge** | OEB regulated – currently $0.00 |

> Submetering has proven savings. It reduces emissions associated with producing electricity and reduces the demand on strained energy grids.

Submetering has proven savings. It reduces emissions associated with producing electricity and reduces the demand on strained energy grids. Data from a recent case study of 200 buildings by Wyse Meter Solutions shows an average thirty-five per cent drop in electricity usage in-suite when tenants are bill payers vs. non-bill payers. Sub-metered consumers have access to the OEB’s robust dispute resolution process. Additionally, the OEB has an Enforcement Process that covers USMPs, LDCs and other energy companies. It holds them accountable for breaching their statutory or regulatory duties, and publishes this information. USMPs adhere to a majority of the same regulations as LDC’s, while providing competitive costs and superior services to customers.

**Wyse Meter Solutions Implements Total Bill Guarantee**

USMPs are committed to maintaining positive relationships with both clients and residents, while upholding their position as leaders in the industry through unparalleled service and innovation. In light of this, as of February 12, 2019 Wyse Meter Solutions implemented a total bill guarantee to ensure its Ontario electricity customers continue to receive superior levels of service at a total price less than what the local distribution company would charge. With this announcement, Wyse’s Ontario electricity customers will have further confirmation that their total electricity bills are lower than the local distribution company, guaranteed.

*This article was written by Peter Mills, Co-CEO, Wyse Meter Solutions Inc. For more information, contact pmills@wysemeter.com*

# CFAA RENTAL HOUSING AWARDS

## Don't miss your chance to be part of the 2019 celebration!

Now in its 4th year, the CFAA Rental Housing Awards Program keeps on growing. Awards finalists and winners will be announced at the CFAA Awards Dinner on May 14, at the CFAA Rental Housing Conference 2019 in Toronto. In the meantime, rental housing providers from across Canada are invited to enter the following award categories:

- Property Manager of the Year
- Off-Site Employee of the Year
- On-Site Employee of the Year
- Rental Housing Provider of the Year (NEW)
- Marketing Program Excellence of the Year (NEW)
- Renovation of the Year
- Rental Development of the Year

Also new for 2019, CFAA has launched the Rental Housing Awards Application Portal. The new portal is designed to level the playing field by standardizing award applications, and helping our judges better manage the growing volume of applications.

The Awards Application Portal is accepting applications until 12:00 midnight PDT on Monday, April 8, 2019. If you can't apply this year, plan to apply in 2020.

Visit https://cfaa-fcapi.org/Awards.php for more information about the application process, and to access the Awards Portal. Rental industry suppliers are also welcome to visit the link to see what opportunities exist for them.

### CALL FOR JUDGES AND SPONSORS

CFAA's Awards Program relies on volunteer judges and sponsors to help keep our program open and free of application fees. Please consider volunteering your time, or sponsoring components of the awards program. To learn how to enter, judge or sponsor, please email awards@cfaa-fcapi.org.


# SPRING BULLETIN

## ENBRIDGE GAS DISTRIBUTION AND UNION GAS HAVE MERGED

Effective January 1, 2019, the new legal name of the amalgamated organization is Enbridge Gas Inc. This name will be reflected on any invoices going forward. The former Union Gas will be transitioning to the Enbridge brand over time. All invoices will now reference a new HST number.

**Vendor Set Up:**
If you require information about Enbridge Gas Inc. for your company's accounts payable process, please forward the relevant form to ugladvice@enbridge.com. All invoices are required to be paid on time.

**Impacts to Payments Received from Union Gas Limited:**
You will still be able to cash Union Gas Limited issued cheques beyond Jan. 1, 2019. Any new payments issued after Jan. 1, 2019 will be issued under the name "Enbridge Gas Inc."

**Invoice Changes for Existing Enbridge Gas Customers:**
Enbridge natural gas invoices will have a new look and format beginning in 2019. Enbridge has provided a short video and details on the new billing format on their website - https://www.enbridgegas.com/My-Account/My-Bill

Enbridge Gas would also like to remind you of the various options available for paying your monthly utility bills: Pre-Authorized Payment; Credit Card Payment; Online Banking; and Standard Mail.

E-billing options are available as well as online access to your account details. Please don't hesitate to contact us should you have any further questions on managing your monthly gas bills.

For Former Union Gas Accounts seeking updated payment instructions, please contact your account executive.

## GREENHOUSE GAS POLLUTION PRICING ACT UPDATE

Following the elimination of Cap & Trade by the Ontario PC government, both provincial and federal efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and global warming have been put into motion. The actions taken so far include:

- The Federal Government brought into force the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act (GGPPA) on June 21, 2018.
- The "Made-in-Ontario Environment Plan" was released by the Provincial Government on November 29, 2018 as the new provincial plan to combat global warming.
- As this plan does not establish a carbon pricing system that meets the Federal benchmark, the Government of Canada implemented the federal backstop program under the GGPPA on January 1, 2019 in Ontario.
- Under the backstop program the Output-Based Pricing System (OBPS) came into effect on January 1, 2019 for industrial facilities who emit greenhouse gas emissions over 50,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent ($tCO_2e$) annually.
- On April 1, 2019, a carbon levy on all fossil fuels will be payable to fuel distributors such as Enbridge Gas
- This levy will start at $20/tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent ($tCO_2e$) emitted or roughly 3.9 cents/m3 of natural gas consumed. This amount will increase by $10/tonne (~2 cents/m3) per year up to $50/$tCO_2e$ (~10 cents/m3) in 2022.
- Finalized regulations for the OBPS under the GGPPA are expected in June 2019.

Under the OBPS, large scale emitters will be charged for emissions amounts above their industry average and may meet their compensation obligation by paying for the excess emissions or through the readmittance of previously issued surplus and/or offset credits.

*Much like Cap & Trade, ECNG will reach out to those who qualify for the OBPS program. If you feel that you may qualify, please call Sasha Giurici at 905-635-3280.*

# FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE COMMUNITY

## Effective strategies for happy residents and satisfied shareholders

BY TED WHITEHEAD, DIRECTOR OF CERTIFICATION, FRPO

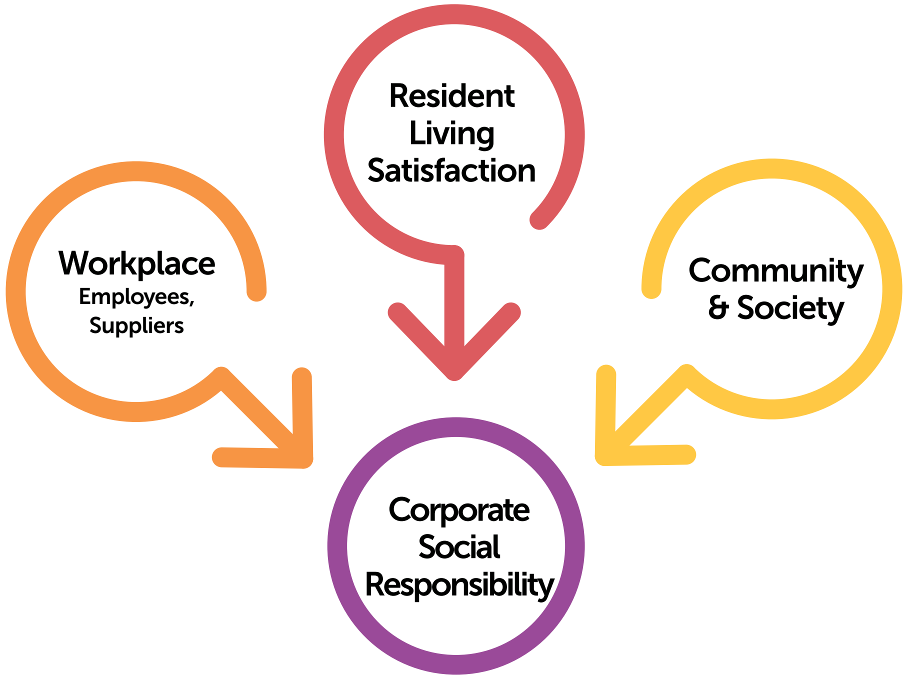
Is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) a key part of your organization's corporate governance measures? Is it designed to protect investors and shareholder's interests?

At FRPO, we established the Certified Rental Building program (CRBP) as a means to demonstrate to government stakeholders that the industry can effectively self-regulate and that we treat our end customers (our residents) with caring and respect. CRBP is a members-only program and remains North America's only multi-res industry accreditation initiative focused on providing a "quality assurance" Seal of Approval to residents while protecting member public image interests and reducing investor/shareholder risks.

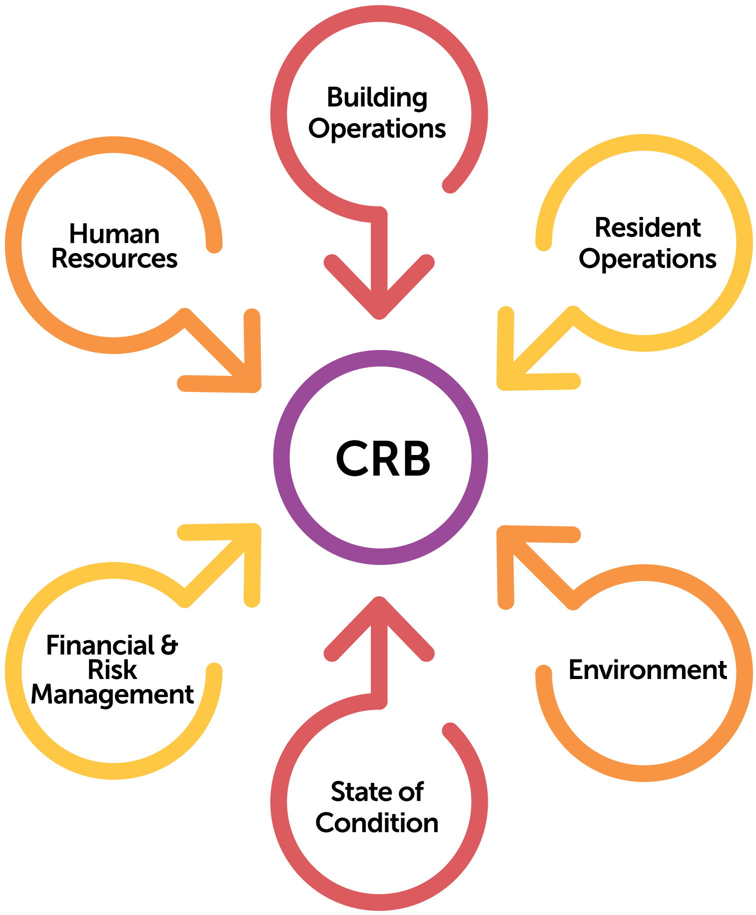
Corporate Social Responsibility can best be defined as embracing policies and behaviours that drive a positive workplace environment, enhance the residents' daily living experience, and actively contribute to the betterment of the community as a whole. Adopting an effective CSR regime tells shareholders and residents alike that you are not only managing the business for profit but also acting in a socially responsible manner.

**WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT:**

This component contains those policies/practices/behaviours that focus on promoting positive employee satisfaction, while encouraging organization caring for its people and its customers (residents). Examples of strong workplace elements include employee benefits, employee education policies, incentive programs, regular performance appraisals, one-up problem resolution, employee orientation, employee satisfaction reviews, strong environmental policies, career



CERTIFIED Rental Building
RENT WITH CONFIDENCE




development opportunities, etc. FRPO's CRBP standards address many of these specific areas, and encourage employees to be proud of the role they play each day in promoting industry professionalism, and providing quality service.

### RESIDENT LIVING SATISFACTION:

This component speaks to how your residents perceive their living experience in your buildings and apartment communities. Factors influencing living experience relate to policies and behaviours around maintenance requests, resident inquiries, friendliness of building staff, building and grounds cleanliness, ongoing and effective communication, soliciting and listening to resident feedback, promoting a green living environment, etc. FRPO's CRBP actively promotes the "best of the best" in apartment living and regularly surveys residents to determine their overall satisfaction with living in CRB-Approved buildings.

### COMMUNITY & SOCIETY (GIVING BACK FOR THE GREATER GOOD)

This component outlines how your organization is giving back for the greater good of the community/society. This includes having key policies and behaviours in place that clearly articulate your company's commitment to being socially responsible, and demonstrate caring for employees, suppliers, residents, the environment and the communities you operate in. You should have effective communications in place that ensure your employees, residents, partners, and local government officials know what you care about and the actions you take to give back to community. The CRB program mandates good human rights practices, environmental policies, employee accessibility training, CRB Ambassador training and more.

### FRPO'S CRB PROGRAM ESTABLISHES, SUPPORTS AND ENDORSES EFFECTIVE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRACTICES

At the heart of the reason why FRPO introduced its industry CRBP certification initiative was the opportunity to demonstrate to all stakeholder groups our ability to self-regulate, and our commitment to being a socially responsible industry. The latter point includes demonstrating our caring for employees and residents, while promoting safe, healthy, and greener apartment communities across Ontario.

CRBP Standards of Practice cover six core elements that build, support and endorse a property management company's CSR commitment. They effectively ensure that the CSR component areas of Workplace, Resident Living Experience, and Socially & Environmental Responsibility are well covered. They are further accredited through a third-party verification compliance audit.

Each CRBP member receives two industry certifications once their buildings have become officially sanctioned under the program. The first certification CRB-APPROVED reflects that each building has demonstrated that it has the policies/processes/procedures in place that demonstrate compliance with the

CRBP Standards of Practice. The second certification demonstrates compliance with CRBP's environmental standards.

These two certifications represent the industry's "Certified Seal of Approval" and are widely recognized in the public domain and government stakeholders alike. They denote providing a "quality assurance" guarantee to Ontario renters while demonstrating environmental stewardship and leadership with residents and the community. More importantly, for property management organizations they provide enhanced public & corporate governance reputations.

*FRPO's CRBP provides a sound footing for large & small property managers to develop an effective Corporate Governance CSR culture for their organizations. For literally pennies a day, a property management company can enrol their organization and buildings in FRPO's CRB program. For more information on FRPO's CRBP please contact Ted Whitehead, Director of Certification – 416 302-4842 or twhitehead@frpo.org*

# EVOLUTION OF THE PROPERTY MANAGER

Does the title still fit the role?

BY CHRISTOPHER LEE, CEL & ASSOCIATES, INC.

As the real estate industry evolves, so does the role of the property manager. Long-gone are the days of solely managing a property. Property managers are becoming more like "Business Directors" with complete operational expertise, financial and business decision-making authority, technology acumen and the service skills of a Ritz-Carlton Hotel concierge. In fact, managing the physical property is becoming an increasingly smaller part of the job, as the resident experience takes priority.

The term "Property Manager" first emerged in the early 1930s out of the role of "Building Supervisor", (an elevated engineer). The formation of the Institute of Real Estate Management [IREM] and the emergence of the title "Certified Property Manager" enhanced the popularity of the role, and today there are around 9,000 CPMs. Real estate professional organizations such as NAA, BOMA, ICSC, ULI, IFMA, and NMHC, among others, have elevated the role and quality of property management positions. Unfortunately, yesterday's property manager is not today's, and nor will it be tomorrow's.

## WHAT WILL THE JOB LOOK LIKE?

Creating valued workplace environments, experiential retail destinations and interactive dwellings will require an understanding and acceptance of new technologies, like IoE, automation, robotics, and online tenant/resident interfaces. Civic philanthropy, environmental sensitivity, disaster/emergency protocols, management of social media, predictive analytics and knowledge of new building materials and processes will also be tied into the role.

Residents will likely have "Tenant Chips" (or an apparel item) providing entry, elevator and restroom access. This chip may also turn lights on and off, regulate temperature control and accommodate the patterns of each individual. Eventually, these tenant chips will track wellness, activate multimedia and communications technology and carry out various tasks. Work orders will be placed via apps and technology (such as that being offered by Zenplace and others) to track FFE usage and lifecycles. Chatbots and AI bots will handle work orders.

Software will take data from its property management software and automatically create work orders. Leasing and property tours will be conducted virtually. Cloud-based property management software will give owners and residents 24/7 dashboard-like access to real-time information, video streaming and reporting. Voice recognition will create instant communications between residents and tomorrow's property managers. Energy monitoring apps will help buildings to be more energy efficient. Sensors in carpeting and common areas will enable better utilization and reduced maintenance costs.

Integrated building systems, "sustainable" and "wellness" ratings will be commonplace, cost management systems and telecommuting will require commercial buildings to become 24/7 hubs and portals for tomorrow's mobile and connected workforce. Video conferencing, digital files and the redefinition of "work" will alter building usage and utilization. Clearly, disrupters are changing resident service expectations and delivery systems. The property manager title and responsibilities today are soon to be turned upside down.

## BY 2025...

- Up to 15% of buildings under 100,000 square feet could be managed remotely
- Most property managers will be incorporating some form of AI
- New building materials will begin to rapidly transform space utilization
- Every property manager will seek a wellness rating for his/her building
- The title of "Property Manager" will be eliminated

## OTHER PREDICTIONS:

By 2025 and beyond, where we work, live, shop and play will become an interwoven fabric of connectivity, with accessibility (on demand), generational preferences—plus social, behavioural and experienced-based environments. Purpose, meaning and impact will be valued more than financial performance. Authenticity will be the foundational driver of occupiers as services increasingly replace space in buildings.

As much as 18 to 24 per cent of revenues from property management could come from "network effect" services, rather than management fees. Up to 50 per cent of a property manager's time will be managing platform expectations, experience, predictive analytics and automated building systems. Within the next decade, it is increasingly likely we'll see an industry consolidation of real estate organizations from the Big 10 to the Big 5.

Indeed...the life of the property manager will be dramatically different from today. The implications on hiring, training, certification and professional development will be significant.

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# Success in Property Management Energy Savings

## How Enbridge Gas Inc. and Briarlane Rental Property Management Inc. joined forces to optimize energy controls and increase comfort.

By Matt Bradford

It was a mix of energy insights, incentives, and advanced controls that helped Briarlane Rental Property Management Inc. optimize its natural gas consumption and increase occupant comfort across selected buildings in its portfolio.

In 2017, the Canadian firm participated in Enbridge Gas Inc.'s Commercial Energy Efficiency Program on a project to seek energy saving solutions for a number of buildings in its care. The project began with an inspection alongside an Enbridge Energy Solutions Consultant to identify ways in which energy saving practices could benefit its properties.

## "Embedding data-driven heating controls in several of its properties has given Briarlane's properties the ability to adopt a more proactive and flexible approach to occupant comfort."

"We recognized there was an opportunity to install smarter heat controls within several of its properties," explains George Hantzis, Commercial Energy Solutions Manager at Enbridge. "To keep residents cozy throughout the winter, heating equipment is turned on at the onset of colder temperatures and stays on throughout the entire season. Although ideal temperatures are maintained on cold winter days, without the proper temperature controls in place, many buildings become overheated on milder days," Added Hantzis.

To address this, Briarlane installed advanced heating control systems at seven of its rental properties. The new controls connect directly to each building's gas meter to provide real-time energy consumption feedback. The system then applies this feedback to optimize the heating system's output to deliver the specific amount of energy needed to maintain the desired indoor temperature given outdoor conditions.

**Immediate results**

After one year, the retrofit paid off. In that time, buildings with the new system used less natural gas and eliminated nearly 1,100 tonnes of carbon emissions (the equivalent of planting over 18,000 trees).

Funding support from Enbridge's energy efficiency incentive programs helped Briarlane clients receive over $98,784 in financial incentives.

"The benefits of the new system were realized immediately," reports Pat Brawn, Vice President and General Manager and Principal at Briarlane Rental Property Management Inc. "It prevented overheating, reduced energy consumption and associated costs, and improved resident comfort."

## Briarlane's savings by the numbers

**$94,784:** Financial incentives received from Enbridge Gas Inc.

**3.12:** Years to estimated project payback

**1,100:** tonnes of avoided Carbon Emissions annually

At last count, savings from the project are estimated to pay for the retrofit in little over three years.

**Paying it forward**

Embedding data-driven heating controls in several of its properties has given Briarlane's properties the ability to adopt a more proactive and flexible approach to occupant comfort. "The success of engagement has driven home the value of exploring energy saving technologies and techniques," says Hantzis. "We have seen many successful applications of advanced control systems in multi-residential buildings built before 1990. Even the most efficient buildings in the portfolio realized energy savings by optimizing controls."

**Get with the program**

Enbridge's energy efficiency programs are available to property stakeholders, like Briarlane, at no cost. Program participants receive technical support from an Enbridge Energy Solutions Consultant to help identify and quantify energy efficiency opportunities. Financial incentives are also available to cover up to 50 per cent of eligible project costs.

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*George Hantzis is Commercial Energy Solutions Manager at Enbridge Gas Inc. (operating as Enbridge Gas Distribution). For more information on Enbridge's energy saving programs, incentives and services visit enbridgesmartsavings.com/business, call 1-866-844-9994, or email energyservices@enbridge.com*

**Your Energy. Our Experts. Smart Savings.**

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# CFAA'S NEW MEMBER SERVICES

## Gain the added benefits of direct membership today

CFAA has created a new class of membership, inviting rental providers to become direct members of CFAA to fund added government relations work, and to gain added value for your company and your employees. New services will help rental providers increase their knowledge and professionalism for the benefit of themselves and the whole rental housing industry.

Through agreement with the U.S. National Apartment Association, CFAA has obtained access for Canada's rental housing providers to NAA's education programs, and preferred rates to attend NAA's main apartment conference, Apartmentalize, which is being held in Denver this year, from June 26 to 28.

CFAA's Affiliate Members (members of member associations, such as FRPO) already receive a growing number of membership services, including having representation on the CFAA Board through their member association, and the opportunity to provide input to CFAA through their associations about CFAA's goals. Affiliate Members receive CFAA communications through their member association's publications.

CFAA Direct Members receive additional benefits, which include:

- direct input into the CFAA Board and CFAA policy
- every-issue delivery of RHB Magazine
- bulletins about federal subsidy program changes and tax changes
- the ability to enter the CFAA Awards program for any buildings or employees
- bulletins about the CFAA Conference and Awards program
- a discount on the CFAA Rental Employee Compensation survey
- a discount on registration for the CFAA Conference.

CFAA direct members will receive instructions on how to access the NAA resources. To find out how to access those resources as an Affiliate Member, email admin@cfaa-fcapi.org.

The annual direct membership dues for rental housing providers is $100 plus 50 cents per rental unit. For a landlord with 1,000 rental units, the fee is $600, plus HST. For a landlord with 5,000 units, the fee is $2,600, plus HST.

The CFAA Board urges all readers to join CFAA directly so that the expanded lobbying work can continue, and to gain the benefits of direct membership. So do other leading members of the rental housing industry.

*To apply to join CFAA as a direct member, email admin@cfaa-fcapi.org, and CFAA will send you the application form.*

**Margaret Herd, Senior VP Residential Property Management, Park Property Management Inc, and Chair, FRPO, says:**

*Park Property operates only in Ontario. However, we recognize that our operations and returns are substantially affected by the governments and laws of the municipalities, the Province of Ontario and the federal government, i.e. the government of Canada. Every rental provider in Canada has a stake in what CFAA can achieve in lobbying the federal government. That is why Park Property supports CFAA through a direct membership. That is why I urge you and your organization to do the same. The value proposition is abundantly clear and overwhelming.*

**Geoff Younghusband, Vice-President – Residential, Osgoode Properties, and FRPO Director, says:**

*CFAA has achieved great results for rental providers in the National Housing Strategy. However, there is much work still to do to achieve the best possible program designs and roll-outs. Since many provincial rental housing programs are driven by federal housing policies and programs, your profitability depends on federal policies and programs on housing. CFAA is our voice to the federal government about those policies and programs. CFAA is also addressing rental tax issues, using the current housing affordability crisis as a lead-in. I urge all rental housing providers to join CFAA directly, to provide the funding needed for that work.*

# ENGAGING NEW TENANTS

## How to get the renter love you deserve

BY TIM BLACKWELL

The old adage that first impressions matter is never truer when it comes to renter engagement in multifamily housing. It used to be that a spiffy, tour-ready property and apartment and a knowledgeable and gracious leasing agent was the recipe for selling leases. Today, it's a different ball game.

In this information-crazed world, renters already know about a property before they consider a visit. Internet searches, recommendations from friends or family and online reviews provide renters with plenty of knowledge and shape their preferences.

When they do reach out, property managers have to put on a different kind of smiling face, one that acknowledges the prospect is already well informed and offers support to make the application process seamless.

The goal is to build a stable base of residents who love their apartments have a great resident experience from end to end. Here are some valuable tips to help you achieve that:

## 1. UNDERSTANDING THE RENTER LIFESTYLE HELPS CAPTURE, CONVERT, RETAIN

Personal engagement, whether online or elsewhere, makes a lasting impression. Forty-four percent of online consumers say having questions answered by a live person is one of the most important features a website can offer.

Understanding the renter lifecycle is key, so you can reach, capture, convert, and retain the most qualified renters for the most profitable outcomes.

Being seen in all the right places and knowing what those places are is critical to operational performance. As prospects look online, website content has to be engaging and give a realistic view of the property.

Reviews also matter. Data acquired by the National Multifamily Housing Council suggests that nearly 75 percent of residents say content on apartment opinion sites stopped them from visiting a community.

# 2.

## LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A LONG-TERM, LUCRATIVE RELATIONSHIP

Getting the right renters is the first step in laying the foundation for a long-term, lucrative relationship. Several factors are involved.

Property managers can't ignore the power of the personal touch when attracting and retaining renters. The more you can make someone feel welcome the more apt they are to become a resident and fan. The trick is being available on your next resident's schedule, around the clock.

Giving your residents access to the technology they need is a given, and online payments and portals are making a difference. But some fall short of expectations because they don't share robust functionality for ease of use. And for many renters, paying rent at the leasing office is inconvenient.

But landlords also have to be mindful that not every applicant who arrives at the door or in a portal is a worthy renter. Most strongly or somewhat agree that no matter how much they like an applicant, if their credit check is bad they won't rent to them. The risk of defaulting on the rent and damaging the apartment is too great.

# 3.

## MAKING A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Making a good first-impression on a prospect is important and can determine a community visit or dropping off the radar. Cultivating renter engagement is as much about knowing who prospects are and what they expect but also having the right technology to show the love.

*Originally published in Property Management Insider*

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Altus Group Ltd.
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Lincoln Construction Group
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