

Dear Councillor Farrell,

We, the former tenants of Kensington Manor, urge you and your fellow Councillors to support the proposed amendment to Building Maintenance Bylaw 33M2016. Housing security is an important issue in our community, and ensuring quality of rental housing goes a long way to promote a thriving Calgary.

In late November 2017, 158 tenants were evacuated from Kensington Manor in Calgary with as little as 15 minutes to pack their essentials, and leave the building. The tenants of Kensington Manor were put at risk of building collapse and they were suddenly displaced without adequate compensation, communication, and emergency interim housing. The proposed amendment is an important step in preventing similar emergencies from arising again.

We believe that all Calgarians have the right to safe and dependable housing, regardless of the choice to rent or to own. At Kensington Manor, our lives were put at risk without our knowledge until we were hastily evacuated. Tenants are currently unable to make fully informed decisions about where they live because there are no systematic inspections of buildings that are at increased risk of poor structural integrity.

Housing security allows tenants to budget their income, plan for the future and participate in their communities. While routine inspections may be perceived as inconvenient, nothing is worth more than human lives. Landlords will also financially benefit from routine inspections by avoiding costly emergencies.

For these reasons, we support the Motion at hand, and recommend that it be implemented with effective enforcement powers, and without delay. We implore the members of Calgary City Council to vote in favour of this motion to support landlords in assuring high quality rental properties, and to protect renters across Calgary.

Sincerely,

The Former Tenants of Kensington Manor

