

HCDC 02/17 Written Public Comment

Timestamp	Name	Address of residence	Meeting date	Agenda Item (or comment on item not on the agenda)	Position on Agenda Item	If you are providing a written comment, please leave here:	Email Address
2/16/2026 11:25	Ian Hoffenberg	1603 Orrington Ave. Suite 600	2/17/2026	Just Cause and TOPA	Opposed	There are constitutional issues with these proposals, as well as that this will create difficulty for owners to sell their properties (and for persons to purchase properties as well). The economics of this plan does not coalesce with the goal of creating more housing. This could likely reduce housing supply, not increase it. The City of Chicago's NW Side Preservation Ordinance is now experiencing these issues, and I believe that two alderman (31st and 36th ward) have withdrawn their wards from the ordinance.	ihoffenberg@hoffenbergglaw.com
2/16/2026 11:28	Stephanie Victor	Lake Forest, IL	2/17/2026	Just Cause Eviction	Opposed	Current state laws direct the eviction process. Another legislative layer is unneeded and would be confusing. If wrongfully evicted, the court system readily handles that.	savvy.sheridan@gmail.com
2/16/2026 13:11	Baris Yuksel	430 Callan Avenue Evanston	2/17/2026	Just Cause and Right of First Refusal in th	Opposed	I'm Opposed to these matters and want them removed from the plan. Just Cause will reward bad tenants while forcing out my good tenants Also Right of First Refusal will make apartment building sales take months longer for no benefit to tenants and make property less attractive to buyers. This has been done in Chicago and no tenant ever purchased any building but some bad tenants have used this as an extortion tool against their housing provider.	supremecapitalllc@gmail.com
2/16/2026 19:15	Lisa Pildes	2327 Park Pl	2/17/2026	Housing4All just cause, licensing, right to	Opposed	<p>My name is Lisa Pildes. I have lived in Evanston for almost 55 years. I am a property owner of mostly 2-flats in the 1st, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th wards.</p> <p>Please REMOVE the sections of the Housing4All plan relating to just cause (Protect 1.1A page 47), rental licensing (Protect 1.2A page 48) and tenant right to purchase (Preserve 2.1A page 50).</p> <p>These three anti-housing items have appeared before the Council many times, going back at least as far as 2012, when I was a member of the Council's Landlord Licensing Committee. It is discouraging to think that we will need to go back to litigating these items when they have been consistently and justifiably defeated many times before.</p> <p>Just Cause ordinances turn logic on its head by assuming that a landlord would willingly choose to non-renew or spend the time and money to go to court to evict a lease abiding, rent paying tenant. Instead, they create the possibility that the most disruptive tenant will be the forever tenant, as the landlord is prevented from curing the situation through simple non-renewal but other tenants can move out in search of other more peaceful apartments. Just Cause ordinances make lengthy, costly court evictions the landlord's only resort in dealing with a troublesome tenant and might even have the unintended consequence of forcing court eviction filings when simple lease non-renewal would solve the issue.</p> <p>All of us can agree that the goal is to make rental housing safe, affordable and an asset to the neighborhood. A fully funded and professionally staffed department for the enforcement of current building and property standards codes relating to the condition of rental property is what is important for protecting renters' quality of life and to insure that Evanston has safe and affordable rental housing. Licensing advocates have never been able to show that licensing rental property will increase the number, condition and safety of rental units over current registration and inspections.</p> <p>Right to Purchase ordinances tie the hands of property owners for months, delaying possible sales and chilling market interest in the property. Why would a small landlord, the source of much of the naturally occurring affordable housing in Evanston, want to tie up what is probably the majority of his net worth in such an illiquid, bureaucratic tangle?</p> <p>Please remove just cause, rental licensing and right to purchase from the Housing4All plan.</p>	lpildes@comcast.net

<p>2/16/2026 21:38</p>	<p>John Storey Will</p>	<p>864 Sheridan Road</p>	<p>2/17/2026</p>	<p>Housing4All - Recommendation</p>	<p>Members of the Housing and Community Development Committee,</p> <p>I am submitting this comment in my personal capacity as an Evanston resident and REALTOR.</p> <p>Housing affordability and attainability are important issues. That does not, however, relieve the City of the obligation to proceed carefully when proposals implicate property rights, transaction structure, and land-use intensity. Because Housing4All is broad in scope, it deserves deliberate sequencing before exploratory language is converted into firm policy commitments.</p> <p>Consent Item #5 would remove all exploratory language from the Plan and replace it with action language. That change is not merely stylistic. Several initiatives, including Just Cause eviction (1.1A), Tenant/Community Right to Purchase (2.1A), and Transfer of Development Rights (2.2C), remain items without consensus and are phased in the Preliminary Work Plan into the 2027–2030 timeframe. If policies are still under discussion and years from implementation, the language should reflect that. Converting the Plan wholesale to action language risks signaling that structural direction has been settled before legal, fiscal, and operational issues have been fully examined.</p> <p>With respect to Just Cause eviction, Illinois has an established statutory framework governing eviction and termination of tenancy under the Forcible Entry and Detainer Act. Any municipal Just Cause ordinance should be carefully evaluated for potential state preemption issues within that framework. Restricting an owner’s ability to regain possession of property also implicates property rights and due process considerations, as well as enforcement feasibility. As an Evanston REALTOR, I can attest that uncertainty around possession rights affects valuation, lending assumptions, and small property owner decision-making. Written legal analysis addressing preemption and implementation feasibility should precede any movement from exploration to commitment.</p> <p>A Tenant or Community Right to Purchase program would introduce procedural requirements into private sales transactions that materially affect timelines, contract structure, and administrative oversight. That raises questions of feasibility, enforcement capacity, and potential unintended market consequences. Those impacts should be clearly modeled before policy language is hardened.</p> <p>I also have concerns regarding potential anti-deconversion measures. Broad restrictions on conversion or tenure flexibility can suppress reinvestment, reduce adaptability in aging housing stock, and unintentionally constrain long-term housing vitality. If such measures are considered, they should be narrowly tailored and grounded in current data, with full evaluation of legal and market implications before adoption.</p> <p>The proposed linkage fee presents similar concerns. A housing linkage fee operates as a development exaction, and established legal principles require a demonstrated nexus and proportionality between any fee imposed and the impact it is intended to address. A nexus study and feasibility analysis should precede any shift from exploratory language to commitment language.</p> <p>Transfer of Development Rights warrants particular caution. TDR is a density-allocation mechanism that can shift development potential across parcels and alter bulk, height, and massing patterns. Such mechanisms have significant implications for established neighborhoods and should not be presumed or advanced implicitly through framework language. If the City chooses to explore TDR, its geographic scope, eligibility criteria, and limits must be explicitly defined before policy direction is signaled.</p> <p>More broadly, Housing4All references zoning updates, expanded by-right development, and other land-use adjustments. Those are substantive legislative matters that affect neighborhood character and development intensity. They require their own careful deliberation and should not be treated as foregone conclusions embedded within a broader housing framework. Nothing in this comment should be construed as endorsing rezoning, upzoning, deregulation, or increased density absent separate and specific legislative consideration.</p> <p>Taken together, the initiatives in Housing4All represent a substantial restructuring of Evanston’s housing governance framework. That level of change calls for sequencing discipline and legal clarity. Completing written legal review, fiscal modeling, and clearly defined guardrails before removing exploratory language would strengthen the City’s decision-making process.</p> <p>I urge the Committee to preserve that deliberative space.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>storeywilliamson@gmail.com</p>
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2/16/2026 21:55	Korey Neibarger	864 Sheridan Road	2/17/2026	Housing4All Strategic Housing Plan	Opposed	<p>Members of the Committee,</p> <p>Housing4All references zoning updates and potential changes to development standards. These are significant legislative matters that directly affect neighborhood fabric, built environment, and long-term planning.</p> <p>I encourage the Committee to ensure that any zoning related changes are addressed through clear, separate deliberation. If those items remain exploratory, the language of the Plan should make that exploratory nature explicit.</p> <p>Clarity in this regard will help residents understand what is under study and what is being formally advanced.</p>	kneibarger76@yahoo.com
2/16/2026 22:50	Matt Lederer	2149 Sherman, Evanston IL 60201	2/17/2026	Just Cause renters protection	Opposed	<p>These initiatives will increase cost, decrease the housing supply, and incentive good landlords to leave Evanston.</p>	pmattlederer@gmail.com
2/17/2026 10:23	Nick Stein	7215 N Oakley, Chicago	2/17/2026	Housing4All	Opposed	<p>This is both short sighted in its intended outcome and only further restricts proper business transactions.</p>	nstein1960@gmail.com
2/17/2026 10:26	Michael Alan Gleason	1200 W Sherwin	2/17/2026	Just Cause	Opposed	<p>Just Cause is horrible for tenants with blemishes in their credit. Landlord has no incentive to "take a chance" on someone (bad credit, criminal background, bankruptcy or prior eviction) if they enter into what can end up being a "lifetime lease." This measure would add to the number of evictions filed (as we can no longer simply allow a lease on a bad tenant to "run out") and motivate landlords who can't non renew a bad tenant to engage in bad faith actions like simply "jack up their rent" to force tenant to nonrenew.</p> <p>The tenants are the ones who will be most severely impacted by this bad policy.</p>	mike@rogerspark.com
2/17/2026 10:32	Jeff weinberg	535 kedzie	2/17/2026	February 17 meeting; addressing the Just Cause and Right of First Refusal matters in the Housing4All plan;	Opposed	<p>February 17 meeting; addressing the Just Cause and Right of First Refusal matters in the Housing4All plan; and click you are Opposed to these proposals.</p>	Jeff.weinberg.64@gmail.com
2/17/2026 11:28	Jane Garvey			Just Cause and Tenant Right to Purchase	Opposed	<p>In the Housing4All Plan that you are considering please remove the part about Just Cause and Right of First Refusal on pages 47 and 50. These two sections will make owning rentals in Evanston far more difficult, risky and costly for owners. The added requirements could easily result in less available rental housing. Work to encourage investment rather than punishing those who would like to help.</p>	
2/17/2026 12:15	Tina wallace		2/17/2026		Opposed	<p>You're going to cause problems for the good tenants and reward the bad ones. This is not fair to the good tenants.</p>	Tinawallacechicago@gmail.com
2/17/2026 12:16	Robin Wilson	Evanston	2/17/2026	Just Cause and	Opposed	<p>Tenant right to purchase is a non-issue, as long as ALL potential buyers are subject to the same rules. There is no advantage one buyer to another in capitalism - sellers are looking for a combination of best price & terms - it matters not if a property is bought by someone close by, or a thousand miles away. If any buyer is given favorable terms over anyone else, then you don't have capitalism. Capitalism - unencumbered sale of goods or services. Refer to any resource on capitalism. Here is one: "Property Rights and Capitalism" by Paul H. Rubin, Tilman Klumpp. It is "why private property is essential for the working of capitalist economies. It begins with a definition of property rights as a bundle of rights, noting the various practical limitations. Then it briefly describes the historical and philosophical development of private property rights. It discusses the functions of property rights in capitalist systems, in particular the creation of wealth by facilitating efficient resource use and development, trade, capital accumulation..." If the playing field is level as it should be, there is only "best price & terms buyer right to purchase."</p> <p>The Just Cause topic is problematic for a multitude of reasons. It should be deleted from any housing discussion in a capitalist society. Imagine having a houseguest stay for the weekend, or you the homeowner taking in a friend after surgery, who then has RIGHTS to stay in your property at their discretion, long after you have let them know it is time to go. That's the guise of Just Cause. Property owners, especially the mom & pop owners, are often owner-occupants of their multi-unit property - in 2, 3 & 4 unit buildings. This might be your mother or your Uncle who has lived in a property for 30, 40 years. These folks often price their rentals under market, making it more affordable for more people to live. Just Cause aims to limit the reasons by which these owners, or any owner, can evict a resident, or not renew a lease. That's why we have a legal system, courts and judges. It's the process of the legal system and judges to decide if someone is being evicted wrongfully. Housing providers are already subject to rising property taxes, insurance increases (and at will insurance cancellations) and will simply increase rents to offset the fixed expenses and now legal fees associated with maintaining their home & investment. A lease is a contract with a fixed start date and end date. If a contract is not upheld, or honored by the consenting parties to the contract, then what good is it? Housing providers will continue to seek work arounds, including abolishing written leases, if they are not upheld as the consenting & rightful agreements they are intended.</p>	rsbalt@gmail.com
2/17/2026 12:17	Marv Edelstein	3 Salem Cir, Evanston, IL 60203	2/17/2026	Just Cause and Right of First Refusal in the Housing4All Plan	Opposed	<p>Just Cause will reward bad tenants while forcing out good tenants. Also Right of First Refusal will make apartment building sales take months longer for no benefit to tenants.</p>	marvedel@gmail.com

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2/17/2026 12:35	Mary DeSloover	2118 Ewing Evanston, IL		Just Cause and Right of First Refusal	Opposed	<p>There has been no empirical evidence presented to demonstrate a need for "Just Cause" in Evanston. In fact, Evanston has a very small rate of evictions, with the overwhelming number being for non-payment of rents. Other than occasional anecdotal and unverified stories, there has been no case made for the necessity of "Just Cause" legislation. And if there is some problem demonstrated, have the less obtrusive and less market damaging options been examined or explored?</p> <p>NYU issued a report on the trade offs of Just Cause legislation and it cautions that implementing Just Cause must be carefully planned and studied as its enactment can result in:</p> <p>1) a lack of investment in development and maintenance of existing units, 2) excluding the most vulnerable renters from the market, 3)lengthening the time to resolve landlord-tenant issues, and 4) increasing the time and cost of eviction proceedings.</p> <p>The NYU document argues that alternative options should be examined such as mediation services, encouraging the staggering of rental payment, setting up a registry to monitor and study the market to better solve the problems, etc.</p> <p>The overwhelming majority of the rest of the country, and the rest of the jurisdictions in Illinois, have not implemented Just Cause ordinances. It is not prudent to enact legislation that has been known to have negative effects on investment when a need for it has not been demonstrated.</p>	marydesloover@gmail
2/17/2026 13:10	Liliana Gutierrez	1923 Howard St Evanston IL 60202	2/17/2026	Just Cause Policy - Housing4all	Keep Just Cause	<p>My name is Liliana Gutierrez. I have lived in Evanston for three years and I rent on the south side of town.</p> <p>I am a single mother, and it is very difficult for me to pay rent on a single income, so I have to share a space to cover the rent each month. Even so, the cost of rent is very high, so I ask that you, as a committee, maintain a plan that provides affordable housing for everyone. The cost of rent changes drastically from year to year, and that makes it even harder for us tenants to get support.</p> <p>Today, I ask that you strengthen tenant protections and enforce housing codes to guarantee safe living conditions and fair rents. Please integrate the Just Cause policy into your plan.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and for considering my request in this testimony. The system has failed low-income families; please do not fail us and protect us as residents of Evanston.</p>	lesliesofia278@gmail.com
2/17/2026 13:48	John Alsterda	614 Ingleside Pl., Evanston	2/17/2026	Item 5A Recommendation for Action Hous	Limited oppositio	<p>I oppose Initiative 1.1 A re: amending the landlord-tenant ordinance to add so-called "just cause" restrictions on non-renewal of leases by landlords. The freedom to contract, within the bounds of the law, is a fundamental right of all parties to a lease agreement, and, the Evanston LL-T ordinance already mandates a significant notice period to tenants for non-renewal. A landlord (especially owners of smaller buildings, e.g. 1-4 units) should not be constrained in their ability and right to non-renew a lease for any reason, or no reason at all, so long as the landlord is not violating law, e.g. for discriminatory or retaliatory reasons. What if, for example, a landlord desires to take occupancy of a unit himself/herself as a residence, or wishes to have a family member occupy the premises, or wishes to perform substantial improvements that would render the premises untenable during construction? Eviscerating the right of a property owner to decide who occupies units, and when they are occupied, by adding so-called "just-cause" non-renewal provisions to the LL-T ordinance is bad policy. I also oppose, for similar reasons, Initiatives 2.1 A (tenant/community right to purchase program) and 2.2 A (anti-deconversion policy). As to the "right to purchase program, this is an unjustified and unwise governmental intrusion into the basic notion that the marketplace, in which a willing seller and a willing buyer agree upon a price (and other terms of sale), is the best and most efficient means by which property is transferred. Anti-deconversion policies strip landowners of the right to develop properties in the manner that they deem fit. If applied retroactively to existing ownership, legal issues of indirect taking of property in violation of the takings clauses in the Federal and State Constitutions, may be implicated by prohibiting de-conversions. If, for example, a property owner wishes to convert a multi-family residence into a single-family residence because that is their preference, they should be free to do so.</p>	jalsterda@yahoo.com



Ana Elizarraga <aelizarraga@cityofevanston.org>

Fwd: Public Comment — Housing4All (HCDC, Feb 17, 2026)

Lara Zalmezak <lzalmezak@cityofevanston.org>

Tue, Feb 17, 2026 at 8:40 AM

To: Elizabeth Williams <ewilliams@cityofevanston.org>, MJ Johnson <marionjohnson@cityofevanston.org>, Ana Elizarraga <aelizarraga@cityofevanston.org>, Bobby Burns <bburns@cityofevanston.org>, Juan Geracaris <jgeracaris@cityofevanston.org>, Matt Rodgers <mroddgers@cityofevanston.org>, Shawn Iles <siles@cityofevanston.org>

Public Comment for tonight's 2/17/2026 Housing & Community Development Committee meeting at 6:30 pm.

Thank you.

Lara Zalmezak

Administrative Lead

Office of the City Clerk

City of Evanston

Pronouns: (She, Her, Hers)

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From: **John Storey Williamson, Broker** <storeywilliamson@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Feb 16, 2026 at 9:38 PM

Subject: Public Comment — Housing4All (HCDC, Feb 17, 2026)

To: <publiccomment@cityofevanston.org>

Members of the Housing and Community Development Committee,

I am submitting this comment in my personal capacity as an Evanston resident and REALTOR.

Housing affordability and attainability are important issues. That does not, however, relieve the City of the obligation to proceed carefully when proposals implicate property rights, transaction structure, and land-use intensity. Because Housing4All is broad in scope, it deserves deliberate sequencing before exploratory language is converted into firm policy commitments.

Consent Item #5 would remove all exploratory language from the Plan and replace it with action language. That change is not merely stylistic. Several initiatives, including Just Cause eviction (1.1A),

Tenant/Community Right to Purchase (2.1A), and Transfer of Development Rights (2.2C), remain items without consensus and are phased in the Preliminary Work Plan into the 2027–2030 timeframe. If policies are still under discussion and years from implementation, the language should reflect that. Converting the Plan wholesale to action language risks signaling that structural direction has been settled before legal, fiscal, and operational issues have been fully examined.

With respect to Just Cause eviction, Illinois has an established statutory framework governing eviction and termination of tenancy under the Forcible Entry and Detainer Act. Any municipal Just Cause ordinance should be carefully evaluated for potential state preemption issues within that framework. Restricting an owner's ability to regain possession of property also implicates property rights and due process considerations, as well as enforcement feasibility. As an Evanston REALTOR, I can attest that uncertainty around possession rights affects valuation, lending assumptions, and small property owner decision-making. Written legal analysis addressing preemption and implementation feasibility should precede any movement from exploration to commitment.

A Tenant or Community Right to Purchase program would introduce procedural requirements into private sales transactions that materially affect timelines, contract structure, and administrative oversight. That raises questions of feasibility, enforcement capacity, and potential unintended market consequences. Those impacts should be clearly modeled before policy language is hardened.

I also have concerns regarding potential anti-deconversion measures. Broad restrictions on conversion or tenure flexibility can suppress reinvestment, reduce adaptability in aging housing stock, and unintentionally constrain long-term housing vitality. If such measures are considered, they should be narrowly tailored and grounded in current data, with full evaluation of legal and market implications before adoption.

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More broadly, Housing4All references zoning updates, expanded by-right development, and other land-use adjustments. Those are substantive legislative matters that affect neighborhood character and development intensity. They require their own careful deliberation and should not be treated as foregone conclusions embedded within a broader housing framework. Nothing in this comment should be construed as endorsing rezoning, upzoning, deregulation, or increased density absent separate and specific legislative consideration.

Taken together, the initiatives in Housing4All represent a substantial restructuring of Evanston's housing governance framework. That level of change calls for sequencing discipline and legal clarity. Completing written legal review, fiscal modeling, and clearly defined guardrails before removing exploratory language would strengthen the City's decision-making process.

I urge the Committee to preserve that deliberative space.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Storey Williamson

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John Storey Williamson

Illinois Real Estate Broker

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