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Mmm, beige

A Metro reporter spent a week consuming nothing but Soylent. Use Metro AR to see what others thought **PAGE 18**

HE DOESN'T ALWAYS WEAR SWIMWEAR ...

... BUT WHEN HE DOES, HE PREFERS TIGHTY-WHITIES. BECKS TALKS HIS LATEST FASHION PROJECT; USE METRO AR TO SEE MORE **PAGE 30**

Calgary rental reality: Life on the 'Funky Bus' runs \$700 a month

Rental squeeze. Industry executive calls arrangement 'curious'

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Calgary's razor-thin rental market has forced many folks to find alternative accommodations — but few as "funky" as the four-decade-old RV parked behind Kym Tymeson's house.

After spending the past winter inside the Chevy motorhome themselves, Tymeson and her fiancé and 13-year-old son found a house to rent in Martindale and put their four-wheeled digs on the market to subsidize their rent.

The so-called "funky bus" was listed in April for \$700 per month. The couple was immediately swamped by dozens of applicants who ran the gamut from a health-care worker and her daughter to an older-aged entrepreneur to a pair of German travellers.

"There's just so many people looking," Tymeson said.

Industry reports peg Calgary's rental vacancy rate around one per cent, although Mayor Naheed Nenshi has sug-



Martindale resident Kym Tymeson stands in front of the 1973 Chevrolet Aquarius motorhome that she's currently renting out of her backyard. BRYAN WEISMILLER/METRO

Amenities

The motorhome is billed as "recently renovated" with new paint and cupboard handles. Amenities include:

- A bathroom, toilet and shower (sans water service)
- Wardrobe complete with custom pop art à la Roy Lichtenstein
- Air conditioning unit, heating (propane and electric), oven and three-burner stove
- Flatscreen TV (and HDMI input)

ector of the Calgary Residential Rental Association, called it a "curious" arrangement given the mobile home is conditionally parked and that a one-month damage deposit was required.

"I haven't heard of anybody doing this before," Baxter said. Baxter noted the landlords would have to comply with the fire code, housing and health standards and "everything a normal landlord would do in his (or her) business."

In that sense, he drew a comparison to money-motivated owners of secondary suites.

"What they fail to realize is that they're in a business," he said.

gested the actual figure is closer to zero in the wake of last

year's historic floods. Aeryn Morgan has felt the rental squeeze. Tired of bouncing around single-room rentals, Morgan jumped at the chance to rent out the Tymesons' motorhome.

"It's too damn expensive with the damage deposits and

all of that," he said. "I have a dog as well, so it makes it a lot more complicated." The 23-year-old scaffolder describes the motorhome as "cosy" and didn't seem to mind the retro decor: orange curtains, faux wood panelling and all.

"It's hard to find anywhere

you're free," he said. And while it may be a free-wheeling space, RV owner Tymeson marvelled at how divided people were over the monthly charge.

"It was still too crazy expensive for some people and just such a good bargain to others." Gerry Baxter, executive dir-

Quoted

"When you're on a tight budget, you can't be too choosy about your living environment."

Aeryn Morgan, a 23-year-old scaffolder, who is renting the RV