

Dear Councillors,

My name is Greg Davidson, and I am reaching out today to express my support of the proposed updates to bylaw Section 4.15 related to Home Occupations which allow additional dwellings and accessory buildings to be utilized for Home Occupations.

I have been a resident of the City Guelph for over 20 years, having spent a large part of my youth here, attended the University of Guelph, worked professionally within the community, and now as a parent of a young child I'm actively aware and invested in City decisions that can have an impact to help our community evolve, develop, and create for our current and future generations. I have witnessed the development within this City, from the new Quebec Street Mall to the construction of the new City Hall, Downtown improvements, and the new industrial park in the south end of the city. I am proud to live in a city where I know people's values and voices are considered in the City's decision-making matrix. Though I have not always aligned with the City's decisions, I am excited about how the city has grown and evolved in recent years which gives hope and promise for our future.

As so many of us can attest, COVID-19 created an unprecedented landscape for all families, businesses, and industries where we all had to learn to navigate, adapt, and adjust to a new normal. Personally, this meant adapting to a work-from-home environment and as I'm sure many of you who have young children can relate, with a newborn at home this created a few challenges in itself... I can't count on two hands how many friends and colleagues I know who experienced the same or similar challenges. Many of them were creative, and luckily financially able, to create a separate workspace outside of their immediate building envelope (homes) and either convert an existing shed or dwelling into a workspace or built a new one. For many, this seems to have been the secret to surviving two-to-three years of being isolated from their normal work environments. That said, I'm one of the lucky ones who can open my laptop, access my network, and work in any agile work environment to meet work demands. Many of my friends who are self-employed however were more impacted since they rely on a business space and regular face-to-face interactions to earn a living.

As we gradually move out of an isolated world, we face new challenges such as aggressively rising inflation, risk of recession, global crises, all impacting our cost of living including food costs, gas prices, and rental rates on both residential and commercial spaces. We're being forced to reinvent ourselves and our businesses strategies. As constituents we need the City's support to provide room for businesses to evolve as the world and our community's change. The world around us changes at a pace that makes many of us uncomfortable... admittedly I'm not a creature of change, but I recognize the importance to remain current and adjust to new demands.

The proposed bylaw updates will provide our community the flexibility we need. Whether it means balancing a hybrid work-from-home/work-from-office requirement, needing to manage homecare to support a young or aging family member while still meeting work demands, or simply trying to survive and support our families; to save money and afford to live in our community. We need options and flexibility, and the support from City Council to allow us to adapt, to be creative, and to help us in-turn support the community we love.

Please consider this letter my formal support of the proposed updates to bylaw Section 4.15.

Sincerely,

Greg Davidson