

Hello – I recently moved from Kitchener to Guelph, although I still own a business on Victoria Street in Kitchener. My business has constantly been negatively impacted by the tent encampment on Victoria Street in Kitchener, and by certain people living in the subsidized motels across the street from my business. Issues have included break-ins, shooting up drugs in my loading zone area, passing out on my front lawn, harassing customers in my store, catalytic converters being stolen from my business vehicles, etc. I was heart-broken when I drove through downtown Guelph this past week and saw the tents set up in the main square, because I know how difficult it is to remove them once they are set up, and I know how much it will impact your local small businesses in the area. I purposely drove around the central area of Guelph, and noticed several vacant lots, vacant buildings with parking lot space that would be suitable for better, temporary housing. My experience in Kitchener is that if you don't act quickly to address the situation, it will quickly get out of hand, and be unmanageable.

I should also mention that I am originally from Guelph, went to the University of Guelph, still have family and friends in Guelph. Everyone I know is dismayed about the downtown situation, and feel that city council needs to address the concerns of your tax-payers and businesses, who actually make the city liveable.

Sincerely,  
Susan Demeter (nee Langdon)