

To Mayor Cam Guthrie and members of Guelph City Council,

My name is Claire and I have been living and working in Guelph for the last 5 years at various small businesses in the downtown core. I have cohabitated and interacted with our unhoused community on numerous occasions and have gotten to know a few of them personally. Upon reading the motion put forward that advocates for the removal of encampments that we now see cropping up in St. Georges Square, I have become GRAVELY concerned for the safety of these folks as winter grows dangerously close. To my knowledge, a majority of these folks are people who once sought shelter in 90 Carden, and since the property was sold, now have nowhere to go that isn't isolated from the life saving supports that the downtown area provides, namely from the Royal City Mission, and accessible public transportation.

With no mention of timeline or guaranteed shelter for displaced individuals I am worried that even temporary shelter supports could be lifted at any time, leaving people once again displaced in the dead of winter. We need PERMANENT housing solutions FIRST before we can evict these individuals who are just trying to survive, off of public property.

I would much rather see tents in the open area outside of BMO bank, than dead bodies in our streets. These are human beings who are struggling greatly, and to dehumanize them further through passing this bylaw would be a great stain on the community of Guelph; a community that I and so many others take great pride in.

Thank you for your consideration.