

Good morning City of Guelph,

My name is Jessie and I have signed up to speak at the city council meeting on November 28th - I am really looking forward to a civilized discussion on the proposed bylaw! When I first saw the proposed bylaw essentially making these unfortunate folks' existence illegal I was heartbroken. Is this the same Guelph I moved to in 2009 for University and loved it too much to leave? This is a special city filled with caring and compassionate people who are willing to help those in need. One of the main reasons I stayed here is because of the wonderful charities I got involved in and the incredible community who seems to understand that we need to take care of our most vulnerable. This bylaw is a slap in the face to not only the unhoused but to compassionate charitable groups, citizens who care, and anyone proud to call themselves a Guelphite.

Mayor Cam - I understand you don't like the appearance of encampments and are hoping this bylaw inspires solutions. I cannot understand this logic, this is a last resort for these folks! No one is camping outside downtown Guelph because they have other options. Making their existence illegal will do nothing to help, just make their already difficult lives even harder.

It's great you made some changes in response to your communities opposition to this. However the new proposed bylaw is equally frightening. I am understanding there is to be no enjoyment of downtown Guelph outside of spending money at businesses. I look at section 5 and wonder how something so vague and up to interpretation would even be enforced. If I use a public bathroom and linger in to warm up during the Santa parade I am sure I will be fine although I'd be in violation of 5.k, would a person of colour be treated the same? Kids running around playing tag screaming at how much fun they're having are in violation of 5.a, 5.b, 5.g, 5.h, will they be fined as well? Every bylaw officer I've met has been a great person, I feel for them having to enforce such vague regulations. I would not want to be in their shoes if this bylaw is passed.

I commend you for being open to feedback, but I am horrified at both of these proposed bylaws. While this letter is just a small snippet of my feelings there are so many bigger issues and I hope you listen to some of the most impacted folks when they speak on Tuesday. I will not let this rest and neither will your community. We will all band together to restore the care and compassion that used to be an integral part of this city!

Thank you for your attention,

Jessie