

Dear Guelph City councilors,

I am writing to express my deep concern around the proposed Public Space Use Bylaw that aims to restrict, regulate and criminalize encampments under the guise of public safety. This new proposed bylaw threatens the means of survival for many underhoused community members living in the downtown core and throughout the City of Guelph.

Displacing underhoused community members, restricting their movement, placing absurd rules and regulations on their very existence is outrageous and is a human rights violation. The Public Space Use Bylaw is an explicit attack on Guelphites living in poverty. It is also deeply concerning that the City of Guelph has opted to skip any public engagement and consultation around a bylaw that will harm so many people. Real dignified housing solutions are needed, not bylaws that further marginalize and harm our community members living in encampments.

I am calling on Guelph city councilors to reject this proposed bylaw and instead work to better understand the immediate and long term needs of the underhoused community members in Guelph and to offer immediate and long term support and dignified solutions.

Nico Newton
they/them