

I am writing as a life-long Guelph resident who frequents the downtown area to strongly urge council not to pass the public space use bylaw.

If part of the reason for this bylaw coming forward is due to complaints that downtown encampments are affecting business, or making people feel unsafe to shop in the area, I want to enter into public record my own perspective. Personally, I have never felt unsafe passing by the area, and I continue to frequent downtown businesses with out any trouble. In fact, most of the businesses are not only busy, but the owners support the encampment, provide aid, and encourage their customers to support and advocate for our houseless friends. I emlore council to weigh the complaints against the experiences of myself and other citizens before making a judgement on a law that will have such a negative impact on our houseless friends.

In my opinion, until homes or adequate shelter can be provided, camping on public property in the city center is the safest and best option for those who need it. Close access to social assistance and aid is essential. Moreover, being able to interact and recieve help from shoppers and residents passing by is invaluable . The rules and restrictions of this bylaw are arbitrary, cruel, and as the author of the bylaw suggests, face certain challenge to charter rights by denying access to water and heat.

I urge you to vote down this bylaw, and continue to focus on providing shelter and homes as some progress is being made there.

Evan Gordon