

July 12, 2024

Re: Mayoral Direction B4 - Temporary Structured Encampment

To Mayor Cam Guthrie and members of Guelph City Council:

Our collective lament is that other levels of government are not advancing a housing agenda quickly enough or to a sufficient degree to meet the needs of local communities. In the absence of this then, it is important that City Council drives a comprehensive plan of action¹.

The Guelph Chamber and our caring and capable network have always been ready, willing and able to help. To accelerate the discussion on addressing temporary emergency shelter options, as an example, this past March we reached out to City officials with an offer to convene conversations about how the private sector and development community could help contribute to solutions ahead of winter 2024.

This opportunity was not pursued and an official expression of interest for donated land was enacted. We identified the uncertainty we heard; the trepidation to engage in a formal process about land donation without the opportunity to receive more information to better understand the criteria and any additional obligations or opportunities it incites.

Our best understanding of the situation suggests our community needs additional alternative emergency housing options or contingency plans ahead of another winter season, and we would be happy to help unlock assets and resources to make any project viable.



Shakiba Shayani
President & CEO
Guelph Chamber of Commerce



¹ See [Community-led Housing Coalition July 10, 2023 submission](#), as an example.