

Given that:

- other municipalities that have passed similar bylaws have been challenged (successfully) in court
- the director of the local Legal Clinic told Council (in person at a public meeting) that if they pass this kind of Bylaw they will lead the charge in taking it to court
- local support organizations who are partners/allies of the City have clearly told Council this does not help and in fact harms people who are already most at risk
- no public consultation with those most impacted has been done
- despite the title (Public Space Use) the situation motivating the creation of this bylaw is encampments, public substance use and folks with untreated mental health challenges
- the bylaw does nothing to address the root causes of these problems - instead it empowers the city to harass and harm the unhoused and afflicted more than they already do with the goal of removing them from public sight
- the predictable impact of such a bylaw is that it prioritizes the feelings and recreation of those with homes over the ability of those without to literally survive and get healthy
- city staff have stated that current bylaw staff do not have the capacity to enforce such a bylaw
- there are real, meaningful actions the city can take that WILL address the root causes of these problem

I strongly urge Council to stop spending time and resources on this proposed bylaw which will be:

- expensive to implement
- difficult if not impossible to enforce
- will lead to legal challenges
- does nothing to address the root causes of the problems
- further harms people who are already being harmed/neglected

Please redirect your efforts to REAL solutions such as:

- restoring and increasing funding to support services such as safe injections sites, shelters, social housing and respite programs such as Royal City Mission
- demanding that the Province and the Federal government compensate the city for these expenses and take over future funding (lead a class action lawsuit with other municipalities if necessary)
- identifying sites for sanctioned encampments or tiny home/shelter communities
- identifying sites for more social housing (including purchasing existing apartment buildings and operating them on a cost recovery basis)
- updating zoning to facilitate more affordable housing builds
- passing bylaws that severely restrict and harshly penalize landowners for vacancy and renovictions
- etc.

Thank you for your consideration

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Kevin Bowman