

Dear Mayor and Council,

I wish to convey my thoughts and concerns with regards to the Public Space By-law. I firmly believe that this is not the way to go. I do like the idea of setting up ground rules such as the spacing of tents, not tenting over planters, and keeping the encampments safe and having them respect their neighbours.

The housing crisis and encampments will get worse if governments, local, provincially, and federally, do not start working together. Guelph could do their part by providing a building to house the homeless such as the Drill Hall and the province, county and federal could provide the other parts of the equation. Having a safe, comfortable, stable place to live can help many.

I really do not feel that a Public Space bylaw is the way to go and feel it goes against human rights. I understand the concerns and problems we are facing but believe alternatives need to be made to address the situation.

I do not believe they should be banned from parks. Over the years I have witnessed many people living along the Eramosa river and have never found their presence disrupting.

I feel that we could try to educate and set up services in areas where they do choose to live, thereby reducing the garbage etc. We do this for events that take place in our parks already, why not provide some services for the encampments (outhouses, washing areas, and bins for garbage etc. Perhaps even a weekly organized meal or the giving away of needed items.

Help them to keep their encampments clean and safe.

Hope all this makes sense as this is such a difficult issue and will be hard to satisfy everyone, but the homeless need somewhere to live. It is a sad state of affairs when a country such as ours has people living on the street and in their cars.

Thank-you for your time,

Lorraine Pagnan