

I am writing this email in support of the passing of the bylaw 2024-359.

While I understand that there are critical legal issues attached to removing the homeless encampments in any downtown area, I believe that the safety of the community and the support for the owners of the retail stores in downtown Guelph is critical to the recovery and success of the downtown over both the short and the longer run.

Additionally, lately the downtown area has become very dangerous, with many violent incidents occurring, and this must change. Guelph is a historic city, with so much life and potential and we need those who live here to be able to conduct their daily affairs in safety.

Further, with the closing of the safe injection site, the drug issue in the downtown is expected to worsen. All of those people dealing with their habit by going to this site, will now be injecting on the street. This will also exacerbate drug dealing in and around the downtown.

I have personally witnessed many incidents of concern, walking into the downtown, and I believe that we need to act now, or we will lose all of the downtown retail stores. Many retail store owners, I understand, are on the cusp of making that critical decision to get out.

I believe that we can house the homeless in alternative locations, and that high risk elements of the homeless populations should be outside of high traffic downtown areas, where their needs can be the focus of more mobile support service offerings.

all the best,

Stuart Barron
■ Liverpool Street.