

Dear council,

I am writing to ask you to vote in favour of the following motions on December 11th's council meeting.

I support the second motion (agenda item 4.2) because it ensures that the council upholds the basic human rights of all its citizens. The provincial government's encouragement for mayors to use the Notwithstanding Clause to push through anti-encampment by-laws is a slippery slope towards erosion of human rights by the government. The Notwithstanding Clause is supposed to be used only in the most desperate and unique situations. This is why it is rarely used. There is no critical reason, for the safety, health or wellbeing of our City, to use the Notwithstanding Clause. As politicians it is your duty to uphold and protect the basic human rights of all your constituents. Additionally, there is no process by which to enforce the Notwithstanding Clause – with services for housing and addiction already well beyond capacity, as well as courts and prisons being overwhelmed. Without adequate services or solutions, the Notwithstanding Clause is simply a sentence for further harm. By voting in favour of this motion, you are sending a strong message that you respect democracy and the human rights of all Guelphites.

I support the third motion (agenda item 4.3) because it ensures that municipalities are pressuring the provincial government to ensure cities like Guelph have the resources necessary to address the housing and addiction crises currently affecting cities across Ontario. Cities, like Guelph, need additional support from the province in order to build housing that is accessible and affordable for people living on a fixed income, and provide services that appropriately address addiction and mental health., including full spectrum supports that include hard reduction options.

Thank you

Melanie Martin