

Holy Spirit Ukrainian Catholic Church
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16 November 2021

Dear City Counsel and to whom it may concern,

On behalf of Holy Spirit Ukrainian Catholic Church, its members and committee, we would like to express our deep concerns regarding the City of Hamilton endorsement of a supervised consumption site at 746 Barton Street East.

The proposed location is less than 80 meters from the parish which is why this has been the main concern of our church and its members since the announcement was released. We are of the opinion that the City did not consult with the community before approving this location and failed to assess the inevitable risks associated with such a site.

The parish is located on the front steps of Barton Street East, a community that has been dealing with crime, drugs, human trafficking and poverty for years. We acknowledge that as a society, we need to help those who need us most, but having these kinds of services, although much needed, so close to schools, businesses that have been struggling for some time now is irresponsible. The presence of Police in the area is noticed daily especially in the alleyways and many hidden passages around Barton Street of this proposed site. These hidden spots have always been primary grounds for drug use and various paraphernalia can be located on any given day.

On the evening of November 11th, 2021, minutes before our monthly committee meeting took place to discuss this topic, we discovered an attempted entry into our lower banquet hall. A closer look at video surveillance revealed two suspects damaging the glass door. This is a pattern that the parish has been dealing with on a regular basis and we are concerned that the situation will become worse. History has shown that after the establishment of such injection site, the crime in the area increases dramatically. Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair quoted "I don't know of any place in the city where a safe injection site couldn't have a significant negative impact on the community".

We are very worried that this will affect the attendance of our parishioners as well as children's programs. We have the dance group Barvinok take practice regularly, and other children programs. There is great concern about children's safety once the injection site opens.

The burden of opioid misuse, addiction and overdose in Hamilton is an urgent problem and we fully support helping our most vulnerable population. It is of strong opinion that the location of such safe injection site was chosen carelessly and without the collaboration of the community; we are asking to consider a different location for this purpose. Our parish has been struggling to keep its doors open for some time as attendance decreases from year to year, the close proximity of this chosen location inevitably risks our livelihood.

Thank you and God Bless.

Father Roman Trynoga

Holy Spirit Church Council

Iryna Protsiv

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iryna Protsiv', written over the printed name.