

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** Encampment behind City Hall

**From:** LOIS TARBUTT

**Sent:** May 5, 2023 8:51 AM

**To:** [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca)

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Good morning,

It has become public knowledge that the encampment behind City Hall has been served notice via By-Law to remove all belongings and vacate the area. Currently there is no deadline for this to be done.

Prior to following through on this matter, please take a chance to put yourself in these individuals shoes. In a City where individual rooms cost \$800+/month, studio/bachelor apartments \$1,100+/month, or 1 bedrooms \$1,300+. You make \$733 on Ontario Works when they allocate your shelter portion. Doing some quick math, it appears there is nowhere affordable to live. Your family supports don't exist. All of your friends are those you've now made in the streets. In order to cope with poor living conditions, mental health challenges, abuse from living on the streets, assault of various kinds, and endless other daily challenges, you turn to substance use to numb the emotional, mental, and physical pain. The City you live in, Hamilton, has a homeless population of 1,500+ but only 507 City funded shelter beds (just over 600 if you include VAW beds that aren't City funded).

Given the situation above, where would you go live? What would you do if you had just a tent and few belongings, but the City you call home, tells you to pack up with nowhere to put you? How would you survive?

If your answer is, I couldn't, I would totally understand. These individuals are resilient and admirable. These individuals survive in the harshest conditions the City has to offer.

Until we find proper shelter options for these incredible individuals, why don't we allow them to continue living in their community? If the City has no indoor public shelter space, maybe it should simply allow individuals to just survive in the outdoor public space.

This is my plea to you, to treat these individuals as the human beings they are. Not as some objects that can be moved around with no consequences for their life. Please consider the harm you are doing to these people before forcing them to pack up and go. Please consider that you yourself, are just a couple of unfortunate events away from being exactly where they are.

Thank you,

Lois Tarbutt