

Dear councillors:

Hope this finds you well. I write as a resident in Ward 8 and as a father of 4 children. I ask that this message be included as public correspondence on the agenda of the General Issues committee's meeting of 12 August.

I write in opposition to Councillors Danko, Francis, and Jackson's motions to exempt certain parks from encampments in their wards of 8, 5, and 6. Though it is clear that many, housed and unhoused, do not want or to live in encampments in public parks, it is, I hope, equally clear that it is a fundamental violation of dignity and, frankly, classist to decide in which parks unhoused people are welcome, or not. People have a right, under the *Charter*, to live anywhere in (so-called) Canada and to be protected from unreasonable laws that could lead to their imprisonment or harm their physical safety. To decide where and in which parks people can encamp is to violate the equality rights that lie at the heart of the *Charter*. As "Hamilton is Home" to all people, a city on Indigenous peoples' lands, it must not become home only to those who have mortgaged property. The value of one's property is less important than the continued life and flourishing of all people in the city. All parks and places must become places of welcome and refuge and to exempt Southam, Sam Lawrence, Confederation Beach, and Mountain Drive Parks from encampments does not at all illustrate or exemplify that welcome.

I urge Councillors Danko, Francis, and Jackson to withdraw their motions, for all councillors to refuse to second Councillors Danko and Francis' motions, or, failing that, for all councillors to vote in opposition to these motions. They do not exemplify the welcome that is needed in these times. I look forward to your actions to represent all residents, particularly those who are not of the wealthy and propertied class.

Respectfully,

Joshua Weresch
Ward 8