

Dear Mayor and Members of Council,

I am writing as a lifelong Cambridge resident and housing advocate to strongly urge you not to support the motion brought forward by Councillors Hamilton and Earnshaw regarding the prevention of forced removals of unhoused persons during extreme weather.

I understand the intent. Nobody wants to see people suffering in a storm or freezing night. But let's be honest: this motion is not a solution - it is political theatre. Talking about tragic concerns without offering real, workable answers is not leadership. It only adds more layers of bureaucracy to a problem that is already overwhelming our city.

Encampments are not safe havens. They are fire hazards. They leave people exposed to frostbite, overdoses, and violence. Pretending that leaving people in tents during an ice storm or heat wave is "protection" is misleading and dangerous.

This motion would also shift the burden onto our hospitals, fire services, and police, who are already stretched thin. We all know what happens when encampments grow: more ambulance calls, more ER beds filled, more fire responses, more taxpayer dollars drained. That isn't compassion - it's passing the problem down the line.

And taxpayers will pay the price. Cleanup costs, damage to parks and neighbourhoods, constant emergency callouts - the bill always lands on the community while the root problem remains untouched.

The real tragedy here is that while Council debates motions like this, the actual solutions - **permanent housing, mental health supports, addiction treatment, and real accountability from upper levels of government** - remain underfunded and pushed aside.

If we want to show true compassion, we need to focus on helping people move out of tents and into safe, permanent housing. Anything else is just keeping people trapped in a cycle of crisis.

I urge you to reject this motion. Cambridge needs leadership that faces the issue head-on, not more symbolic gestures that make things worse for the unhoused and for the taxpayers who are watching our city struggle.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kayla Andrade

Ontario Landlords Watch