

From: Lincoln McCardle

Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2018 12:49 PM

To: Turner, Stephen <sturner@london.ca>; Hopkins, Anna <ahopkins@london.ca>; Cassidy, Maureen <mcassidy@london.ca>; Tanya Park <tanya@tanyapark.ca>; Helmer, Jesse <jhelmer@london.ca>

Cc: Lysynski, Heather <hlysynsk@London.ca>; Mackie, Dr. Christopher

Subject: SUPPORTING THE PROPOSED SUPERVISED CONSUMPTION SITES

Dear Planning and Environment Committee,

I wanted to take a few minutes to write today in the hopes of helping to persuade you to endorse both 241 Simcoe Street and 446 York Street locations for London's supervised consumption facilities. I suppose I would normally begin by explaining why these facilities are so important and desperately required but I'm going to work on the assumption that we are knowledgeable and in agreement on this already and simply move on to discuss the proposed sites themselves. Let me just start by acknowledging that there is almost certainly going to be resistance no matter what site(s) are chosen. While a majority of reasonable people see the need for the site, far less want it to exist anywhere near where they live, work and/or play. I suppose it's easier to pretend that the current crisis doesn't necessarily mean that injection drug use is not already currently happening in all these places currently but of course, well, it's been identified as a health crisis by many far more knowledgeable than myself.

I currently live, work and play downtown and find myself likely a minority as a proud YIMBY - that is to say that I say "Yes In My BackYard!" The number of times I have found discarded needles is beyond comprehension. I know of, and have contacted the London CARES many times - and while they are doing amazing and important work I do question the sustainability of our current model. From my son's school playground to municipal parks to -- well, just about anywhere, keeping my eyes out and asking my children to do the same can be an ongoing cause of concern. I've clearly gotten off-track but reaffirming the need for these facilities let me actually talk to the proposed sites themselves.

If we use the fact that no location or set of locations will be perfect my thinking is that the current locations appear to check off a large number of requirements and preferences for a safe consumption sites:

- located in or near communities where drug consumption currently exists
- a reasonable buffer from the core downtown area and other public spaces
- near existing complimentary support and social services
- reasonably well serviced by transit
- safe distance from schools, parks and in a suitable a discreet location not within a residential neighbourhood

If we recognise that any location offered will meet with some opposition we have to at some point approve the option presented. Why not today. Studies seem to suggest that there is no increase in crime associated with these facilities and given that four hundred of our fellow Londoners have died as a result of opiod use over the last decade I would ask that you carefully consider what message is being sent by further postponing their establishment. Again, the main argument I've heard against any site offered seems to be, and forgive my paraphrasing, that they

are an important and much-needed service that I wish was further from my work and/or home. Over time I've come to the realisation that the so-called experts are often in fact the actual experts. If they are of the opinion that these are currently the best two options on the table than I would be remiss if I did not behoove you to believe them.

In closing, while it's important to keep the bigger picture I mind I do want to also state that at this junction I believe it's equally important that we act quickly. I do want to thank you for your time and consideration and hope that for all of these above, and other reasons, that you will consider endorsing both 241 Simcoe Street and 446 York Street locations for London's supervised consumption facilities.

All the best and have a wonderful day!

Take care,
Lincoln McCardle

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