

Dear Planning and Environment Committee,

I am writing today in support of the Zoning By-law Amendment Application (file number: Z-8971) put forward by the Middlesex-London Health Unit and Regional HIV/ AIDS Connection to allow:

- A clinic use in addition to the other uses already permitted on the subject site.
- This clinic use is intended for a Supervised Consumption Facility.

In May 2018, I launched an online petition via [Change.org](https://www.change.org) that to date has 664 signatures (and counting) in support of the proposed Supervised Consumption Facility and current Temporary Overdose Prevention Site. The petition has had media coverage from [106.9 The X Fanshawe College](#), AM980 Global News London Radio, [CBC London](#), [CTV London](#) and [The London Free Press](#). I began the petition to show my support of supervised consumption and the Temporary Overdose Prevention Site that is currently operating in London, and the petition has spread farther than I could have imagined- it started a conversation, challenged and changed mindsets and got people thinking about something they may not have completely understood or even thought about.

As of Monday, November 26th, 2018, there have been at least 56 overdose events reversed at London's Temporary Overdose Prevention Site at 186 King Street inside Regional HIV/ AIDS Connection since opening on February 12th, 2018. London's Temporary Overdose Prevention Site was the province's first Temporary Overdose Prevention Site sanctioned by the Government of Ontario. On Thursday, November 1st, the Middlesex-London Health Unit and Regional HIV/ AIDS Connection announced they had received federal approval from Health Canada for two Supervised Consumption Facilities to be located at 446 York Street and 241 Simcoe Street in London. The Temporary Overdose Prevention Site located at 186 King Street has also been granted Interim Supervised Consumption Facility status until the 446 King Street Supervised Consumption Facility is operational.

I live in an apartment building that directly backs onto the proposed location of the Supervised Consumption Facility at 446 York Street and I support this within my neighbourhood and community. The Men's Mission with Mission's Services of London is located across the street from the proposed Supervised Consumption Facility. Many of the clients that access services from the Men's Mission use substances and for the safety of themselves, the staff and volunteers working at the Men's Mission they are unable to use their substances within the facility. With that said, many individuals may be using their substances on the grounds outside of and surrounding the Men's Mission- posing a danger to themselves in case of an overdose event, but also to the surrounding community along with the increased risk and reality of discarded sharps (needles) in the neighbourhood.

Many of these concerns, can be managed and addressed with the proposed Supervised Consumption Facility in such close proximity. The Supervised Consumption Facility provides:

- Sterile and clean equipment/ supplies so that individuals do not share with one another (reducing opportunity for disease transmission like HIV and Hepatitis C via shared equipment)
- Emergency medical care from trained professionals should an overdose event/ opioid poisoning occur- this is vital as every second counts
- Access to Naloxone- a drug that reverses opioid overdoses quickly- given via injection or nasal spray that works similarly to how an EpiPen does for an anaphylactic allergic reaction-

allowing the individuals crucial minutes to get to emergency medical care at hospital via an ambulance

- Connections within the space of the Supervised Consumption Facility to vital support services such as addictions care, mental health care, housing support, medical care, and culturally sensitive and appropriate health and social care for Indigenous persons.

The Supervised Consumption Facility will also reduce discarded used needles (sharps) in the neighbourhood as the clients will have somewhere to dispose of them safely and properly- many individuals may be without adequate shelter being precariously housed, homeless or living in a shelter. Loitering will be addressed as these individuals will have somewhere to seek support from one another as peers but also from staff and volunteers within the facility.

I urge you, Planning and Environment Committee to please support the Middlesex-London Health Unit's application for a Zoning By-law Amendment. This crucial life-saving and life-changing social and health service has a place in our community. Let's continue to show care, compassion and love to those experiencing addiction as London faces a multitude of overlapping drug crises as a result of the opioid crisis. London led the way in opening London's Temporary Overdose Prevention Site as Ontario's first sanctioned Temporary Overdose Prevention Site- let's continue the momentum together!

Thank you,

Deana Ruston  
Ward 13 Resident