

RE: Zoning amendment to permit a pilot of temporary mobile shelters.

September 30, 2022

Dear Chair and members of the CPSC,

I raised this issue as an enquiry at the last council meeting, where an emergent motion could have been made. Instead, I am submitting it to your added agenda for thorough consideration by committee.

Temporary mobile shelters, that house one or two people, have become a reality in London. Charitable and faith-based organizations have expressed interest in using them to assist London's most vulnerable. When one considers that there are 274 faith-based organizations and many additional secular charitable organizations, it is not hard to see how the 350 individuals sleeping in the rough (including visitors to London) could potentially be sheltered by enlisting the aid of the broader community. How to make optimal use of these inexpensive structures is worthy of immediate study.

Though the city declined to pilot this strategy in the past, Ark Aid Mission is prepared to do so immediately. We can assist them by taking the actions necessary to ensure their efforts are compliant with our by-laws.

I would note that temporary mobile shelters also represent an attainable solution for smaller communities. If these communities are able to support their own vulnerable populations then they will not feel the need to send them to London. This would provide great relief to our front-line support workers.

For these reasons, I offer the following motion for your consideration.

That staff BE DIRECTED to initiate a city-led amendment to the zoning by-law which would allow a pilot of temporary shelters, including Conestoga huts, to be conducted at 696 Dundas St. London, ON N5W 2Z4 from October 2022 through April 2024 (two winters) at no cost to Ark Aid Mission.

Sincerely,

Michael van Holst
Councillor, Ward 1