
Subject: Safe Street Bylaws

From: C. Lynne Affleck Redacted
Sent: Thursday, June 24, 2021 10:33 AM
To: cityclerk <cityclerk@princegeorge.ca>
Subject: Safe Street Bylaws

Dear Mr. Hall and City Council members,

I am writing to show support for the concerns expressed by the group Together We Stand. I am asking you as a taxpayer to do your very best to find humane solutions for the downtown population. Under the proposed Safe Streets Bylaw, "officers could issue \$1000 tickets, with a \$75 penalty for late payment, for a variety of 'nuisance' behaviors." (Prince George Citizen, June 14, 2021). It does not make sense to fine the most vulnerable members of our community, knowing full well that they cannot pay these fines. As for the threats posed by the homeless downtown, I must say that I really enjoy our downtown, and I have never felt threatened in any way. If all I have to offer is a smile and a hello, then that is what I get in return. Upon several occasions, I have seen business owners in downtown Prince George treat the homeless population with respect and kindness, and, in conversation with one business owner I was told that the street population is not really much of a problem. This business owner told me that there are "flare-ups", some "bad days", but in general the homeless are not a problem. I feel proud to have such progressive, humane business people working in our downtown.

As for finding solutions so that the homeless have a more comfortable place to sleep: temporary or permanent homes, places with showers and toilets, spaces where they can use safely if that is where they are at, I am sure you are considering all of the research coming from the lower mainland, from other parts of Canada, and from overseas, and that you are working hard to implement the best and most progressive practices for these vulnerable members of our community, many or most of whom suffer from trauma based mental illness and addictions.

My interest comes from working for 28 years with the Prince George School District as a high-school teacher. I have several heart-breaking memories of youth in my classes over the years, kids of 15, who I saw slip into addiction within months; their parents searched for help, and there was none readily available: no immediate, intensive, free treatment options to catch them before they fell down to the bottom and their teeth began to decay from drug use. When I see the homeless on the sidewalks, I see the faces of the kids I knew and lost. What would you want for your child if you lost her to the streets?

Thank you for your time, and your service. This is a beautiful city, and we have the talent available to be leaders in finding solutions to this problem. Fines are not the answer.

Sincerely, Lynne Affleck