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Sent: Monday, April 29, 2024 5:31 PM
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Subject: Letter Town of Cobourg Council wrote to Infrastructure Ontario and Provincial Government

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Hello,

I am writing to you in regards to the attached letter that Cobourg Council sent to IO and the Provincial Government.

I too am very concerned about the health and safety of our most vulnerable living rough outside without access to clean drinking water, heat, food and electricity. And I want to remind each of you that it is not criminal to be homeless and being homeless does not mean a person has given up their basic human rights.

The warming hub closes tomorrow. Today I picked up 2 people from Transition House to take them to the Salvation Army for lunch and the foodbank. They let me know that the shelter was almost entirely full. 310 is not opening anytime soon. This means there will be more people arriving at the encampment soon, with no where else to go. I am at the camp frequently and there is 30-40 people living there, including teenagers and seniors. Most with complex mental and physical health conditions. This number will continue to climb as the housing crisis, poverty crisis and opioid crisis continues to rage on with no end in sight.

I want to remind you that any enforced bylaws and regulations within the Town of Cobourg need to be in compliance with the National Housing Strategy and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As well, it would be wise to look into the Federal Housing Advocate recommendations for a [National Encampment Response plan](#) which the Federal Government will be responding to by the end of Summer.

Below is a video from the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness by an expert named Ian De Jong who has worked with many different municipalities/cities to solve their encampments. I found this video most helpful when considering the health and safety implications of an encampment and how to solve encampments- not just pushing encampments around.

In this video he says: "We have to explain to the housed public how a housing focused response rather than a law enforcement approach to encampments is in their best interests as well. Eg. When you forcibly sweep a camp rather than taking the time to access individual needs and provide housing people just have to set up camp somewhere else. When you don't provide items like porta pottys and garbage pick up- unsanitary mess just accumulates and puts people health at risk etc"



I urge you to watch this video and learn from it- and to read the National Encampment Response plan above when making considerations about the well being of our most vulnerable living outside. And to come at this issue through a lens of social justice, rather than criminal justice and potentially discrimination.

I am happy to answer any questions about what I am seeing on the ground at the encampment as I volunteer alongside those experiencing homelessness in our Town many days a week. I will respond honestly, respectfully and openly to any questions you may have. I also know several people living at the encampment who are open to having conversations with elected officials and have so much first hand knowledge and expertise to share.

Thank you for your time.

Jenni Frenke
[REDACTED]



**Town of Cobourg Urges Province of Ontario and Infrastructure Ontario to
Act on Former Brookside Property**

*Letter from Mayor Cleveland addresses the health and safety of the property, lack of
maintenance and adherence to community standards.*

Cobourg, ON (April 29, 2024) – The Town of Cobourg has submitted a letter to the Province of Ontario and Infrastructure Ontario, requesting that they take the necessary steps to become compliant with all municipal by-laws and regulations within the jurisdiction of the Town of Cobourg for the property at 390 King Street East, the former Brookside Youth Centre Property.

Property owners that own property within the jurisdiction of the Town of Cobourg have legislated responsibility for the people that enter their property and the activities that occur on their property. However, no provincial Act or regulation binds the province of Ontario unless the Act itself expressly states the province's intention to be bound by the Act. Because the Brookside property is owned by the province this means that some legislation and municipal by-laws apply to the property and other legislation and by-laws do not. The Town of Cobourg Municipal Law Enforcement Department has therefore been unable to act on Municipal By-laws since the inception of the encampment in September of 2023.

"As the Mayor of Cobourg, and Cobourg Council, we believe that the Province and IO should be making health and safety of the property a priority, including being a responsible property owner and a good neighbour to those surrounding homeowners and all Cobourg residents and Ontario taxpayers," says Mayor Cleveland.

The Town of Cobourg Mayor and Council, Senior Staff, and the Municipal Law Enforcement Department, continue to receive calls regarding the use and condition of the property at 390 King St. E. related to compliance with Zoning, Property Standards, Lot Maintenance, Fire and Life Safety, Nuisance and most recently the arrival of automobiles, boats and trailers being parked on the grassed areas of the property.

On Monday, April 29, 2024, Mayor Cleveland on behalf of Cobourg Municipal Council submitted a letter to the Premier of Ontario, Minister of Infrastructure, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and representatives of Infrastructure Ontario, requesting that the Province and IO work collaboratively with the Town of Cobourg in order to adhere to and comply with any orders or notices issued by the Town on the property.

Additionally, the Town of Cobourg has forwarded the significant concerns regarding the damming of the creek that runs through the property to the appropriate authorities for their urgent response.