

From: [Jodie M.](#)
To: [External-Clerks](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] TUP00027 - Public Comments
Date: Monday, November 8, 2021 12:13:21 AM
Attachments: [Untitled document.docx](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the City of New Westminster's network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

New Westminster City Council

November 5, 2021

I am writing this letter in response to the proposal to New Westminster city council to grant a temporary use permit to use the empty Army and Navy store on Columbia Street as a shelter (either temporarily or permanently).

We are going through an unprecedented time right now with the pandemic, the opioid crisis and the large number of vacant storefronts on Columbia Street contributing to the derelict conditions in the downtown area. The increase in garbage, graffiti, vandalism, and petty crime in the past few years is extremely concerning to me. I have seen human excrement on the street (once even on the steps of our garage exit, which is shared by the police department), syringes and condoms on the sidewalk, and people passed out after injecting drugs.

I have lived in New Westminster for twenty years. My grandmother lived on eighth Street. My aunt worked at Woodwards uptown and my father worked at Columbia Dodge for more than thirty years. When I moved here I found the "grittiness" of the city to be a part of its appeal (when you live next door to a pawn shop you can expect to see some unsavory characters). At this time however, the grittiness has gone too far. I don't feel safe here anymore. I don't feel like I can walk around my own neighborhood anymore without encountering something I don't particularly want to see or experience. Between the constant construction noise and the horrible conditions on the street, I am actually considering whether I want to live here anymore.

I want to emphasize that I am not a NIMBY, I absolutely support social housing and caring for those who are less fortunate and I do not have a problem having these services in my neighborhood. At this point however, the sheer number of shelters and social services in the downtown area is simply overwhelming. It isn't surprising that an increase in support for the unhoused and addicted has had a negative impact on the area.

Why are all of the social services and shelters concentrated in the downtown area? I am on board with helping the less fortunate but, what about the rest of us? Do we matter? With the three new towers being built in the area, there will soon be hundreds more people living here. The amount of property taxes that comes in to the city from this neighborhood must be substantial. Do we, the taxpayers, have any say in what goes on in our own neighborhood? It really doesn't feel like we do.

Jodie Mahovlic
###-549 Columbia Street
New Westminster V3L1B3