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**From:** Steve Harder S22(1) Personal Information  
**Sent:** Monday, June 16, 2025 5:29 PM  
**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Temporary use permit 40 Begbie street

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**Dear Mayor and Council, City of New Westminster,**

As the owner of a wedding-related retail business on the 700 Block of Columbia Street, I strongly oppose the extension of the permit for the supervised drug injection site in our downtown core. While I recognize the public health goals of harm reduction, I am deeply concerned that this facility is negatively impacting local businesses, public safety, and the overall livability of our community. We now have a bigger problem with open drug use that we did before this site opened.

My business, which primarily serves female customers, relies on a safe and welcoming environment to thrive. Over the past five years, we have experienced a significant decline in evening foot traffic due to increased drug-related activity at our doorstep. Customers and staff frequently express fear about loitering, open drug use, and other disruptive behaviors near the shop. For example, our sales after 5 p.m. have dropped by approximately 50% or more in the last few years, a trend echoed by neighbouring businesses. As one of the largest employer categories in the downtown, we are concerned that continued deterioration will force us and others to relocate, undermining the economic vitality of the area.

The proliferation of drug-related services in the downtown core has coincided with a noticeable decline in public order. Issues such as public urination, littering, sidewalk/doorway camping and open drug use have become commonplace, creating an environment that feels unsafe and uninviting. I understand that police resources are stretched, but the perceived lack of enforcement of bylaws addressing these behaviours exacerbates the problem. I expect these kinds of issues in the downtown have also contributed to exploding city costs as represented by the crippling property tax bill we just received.

I respectfully request that the City of New Westminster deny the permit extension for the supervised injection site or explore alternative locations outside the downtown core. These services are not consistent with making our community a vibrant, safe, and economically sustainable destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike. I am happy to discuss these concerns further and collaborate on solutions that balance public health with community well-being. I strongly believe what you facilitated, you get more of. I believe that it what we are seeing now in the downtown of New Westminster.

Thank you for considering my input.

Sincerely,

Steve Harder