



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Roberts and City Councilmembers

FROM: Jessica Simulcik Smith, City Clerk

DATE: January 12, 2016

RE: Documents received at 01/11/16 Council Meeting

CC: Debbie Tarry, City Manager  
John Norris, Assistant City Manager

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Attached hereto are documents received from the public at your January 11, 2016 City Council Business Meeting.

- 1) Written comment regarding homelessness submitted by Brad Lancaster.

COUNCIL TALK  
1.11.16

My name is Brad Lancaster. I live in Shoreline.

I am talking about sticky questions related to homelessness. Tonight, I ask: **Isn't homelessness so complex that Shoreline can't do anything about it?**

Homelessness is a complex problem. Homeless people suffer from a host of difficulties. Our culture's response to homelessness consists in a weirdly fractured tangle of bureaucracies and entitlements. Increasingly, the United States economy demands highly skilled workers who are very flexible learners. If your reading or computer skills are absent, if you cannot walk, if children make you unable to work parts of days, if your health prevents working eight hours, then you may not be able to find work at all. So, we end up with an underclass of unemployed people with problems that are difficult to address. Some of them become homeless. Surely, the City of Shoreline cannot fix all of this. It is just beyond us. If the United States as a whole changed its priorities, then we might be able to fix homelessness. The whole jumble is a big bird's nest. We grumble about the human condition, and have another beer. Many of us throw up our hands in exasperation.

I encourage a different approach. Shoreline needs modest goals, realistic goals, regarding homeless Shoreliners. We can alleviate important parts of the suffering associated with homelessness in Shoreline. We can make a place for people to live in tents for periods longer than three months. We can let the good-hearted people of Shoreline build tiny houses for homeless people, without burying the volunteers in red tape. We can use surplus city properties, or little used portions of parks, to make a place for homeless Shoreliners. We can encourage neighbors with empty bedrooms to welcome carefully-vetted homeless citizens. We can make access to support services simpler. The City can serve as a partner to citizens and organizations that want to work on the problem of homeless Shoreliners. We can undertake solutions that lie within our grasp. We can do what we can do.

Homelessness is a big, complex problem. Not every part of the problem exceeds us. Let's do what we can do.