



**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor Roberts and City Councilmembers

FROM: Jessica Simulcik Smith, City Clerk

DATE: June 6, 2016

RE: Documents received at 6/06/16 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 June 6, 2016 City Council Regular Meeting.

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

COUNCIL TALK  
6.6.16

My name is Brad Lancaster. I live in Shoreline.

I attended the State of the City meeting last week. A nice event. During the breakfast, I spoke with a member of this Council and listened to the excellent pianist. That council member said that he has not been too interested in the statutory changes I have proposed concerning homelessness in Shoreline. I was, of course, crestfallen. This councilmember was, however, pleased to learn of Dayton Beach's attempt to move their homeless persons into Tiger Bay Village, just outside the city. That Florida development would contain semi-permanent housing with a host of associated services. As he spoke, I wondered what the thousands of homeless persons in Puget Sound are supposed to do while waiting for Shoreline's equivalent of Tiger Bay Village to be conceived and erected. According to this council member, encampments of homeless folks should be the province of churches and religious charities.

As I thought about that council member's view, I recognized that we differ in what we mean by the word "home." The council member hunkers in a view of "home" that is the American gold standard. One's "home" is where one lives, a place one owns, purchased by one's sweat and diligence. Public spaces differ from home. We all own public places together. Citizens use public spaces, but briefly. After enjoying an afternoon at the park, we go "home" to our private spaces. Citizens are those with homes. Citizens make this limited use of public space. Citizens have jobs and savings so they can afford this pattern of life and thought.

My homeless friends have a different view. Home is where one lives. My homeless friends may stay overnight at a park, or several overnights. These friends do not want to be hiding in the park. They just lack alternatives. Their government evicts them every ninety days or so. Most of my homeless friends feel that they are something less than citizens. To me they say: No one makes you move. No one forces you to rely upon the charity of strangers merely to exist. We are not really citizens. My homeless friends are right. Some towns have attempted to criminalize homelessness. Others, more rarified in their deportations, turn up their noses and lavish inattention upon homeless persons.

So, my council member's solution is a good one, if only one has sufficient time. His solution remedies homelessness by housing everyone. Excellent! That, however, sounds better than it is. His view means that the vast majority of homeless persons, thousands of them, will remain annoying vagrants, until that distant point in time (which never arrives) when lions graze with lambs and the homeless are housed.

We simply must do better than that.