

From: [Plancom](#)
To: [Rachael Markle](#); [Steve Szafran](#); [Easton Craft](#); [David Maul](#); [William Montero](#); [Paul Cohen](#); [Lisa Basher](#); [Jack Malek](#); [Laura Mork](#); [Miranda Redinger](#); [Julie Ainsworth-Taylor](#); [Susan Chang](#); [Donna M. Moss](#)
Subject: FW: thank you for hearing us and saying "no" to backyard tent cities!
Date: Monday, December 12, 2016 7:08:59 PM

From: maggie[SMTP:MAGGIENUM@YAHOO.COM]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2016 7:08:54 PM
To: Plancom
Subject: thank you for hearing us and saying "no" to backyard tent cities!
Auto forwarded by a Rule

December 12, 2016

Dear Planning Commission,

I'd like to thank the Shoreline Planning staff for hearing the voices of the citizens of Shoreline, and revising the proposed amendments regarding transitional encampments to make it clear that encampments will not be allowed in residential back yards. I support the amendments as revised and released on December 7th, 2016.

I'd also like to address something that's been bothering me ever since I learned about the backyard tent city proposal, and started delving more deeply into the issue of "homelessness". I've come to the conclusion that "homelessness" is a symptom, and almost never the primary problem, and that by using the term "homelessness", we're actually obscuring reality by masking the underlying problems, of which there are many, including:

- 1) rapid population growth, which is creating a housing shortage
- 2) untreated drug addiction and alcoholism
- 3) untreated mental illness

To help any individual homeless person, you need to figure out why that person is homeless, as the prescription will be different depending on the cause of the homelessness. I can think of at least 6 categories into which a homeless individual might fall:

- 1) people who have experienced an economically catastrophic life event, such as a serious illness or an astronomical rent increase without a corresponding wage hike
- 2) people lacking in basic life skills, such as personal finance, time management, parenting, and/or "how to be a good employee"
- 3) the mentally ill
- 4) addicts/alcoholics
- 5) people who can't find a rental because of criminal history
- 6) old-fashioned hobos - people who would rather panhandle than work

I have no idea how many homeless people fall into each category (I'd love to know, but haven't been able to find data), but it's really clear to me that someone in Category 1 might just need some temporary housing, while someone in Category 2 needs some serious training, perhaps "Life Skills Boot Camp". Those in Categories 3 and 4 need treatment (but what do you do if they don't want it?). You might be able to help those in Category 5 by offering tax incentives to landlords to rent to people with criminal records. For Category 6, I have no clue as to what we should do.

The situation is very complex, and by calling it all "homelessness", we're masking the real problems.

Sincerely,
Margaret Willson
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