

Archived: Thursday, October 15, 2020 4:11:53 PM
From: [Neil - Pro Xmas Lights](#)
Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2020 3:52:04 PM
To: [agenda comments](#); [Heidi Costello](#)
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Navigation Center concerns
Response requested: Yes
Sensitivity: Normal

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Thank you Heidi! I do have one request if it's not too much trouble. After sending that email I sent another one to individuals on the council as well as the King County council. The version I sent to them was edited slightly to remove some things that weren't necessary and to articulate my concerns more clearly. If possible, could you replace the first draft with this one I'm pasting below? If you could I would greatly appreciate it, in which case you can feel free to disregard the first version. Thank you so much! Here's the final draft that I would prefer to be used:

To whom it may concern,

Hello. My name is Neil Junkin. I have worked for the Seattle Fire Department in Pioneer Square and the downtown core for the past 5 years. In that time, I have become VERY familiar with the 24-hour Navigation Center on 12th Ave S. Because of that experience, it has become abundantly clear to me that this type of approach simply doesn't work. If you have ever scene the outside of the building, you'll know how it is littered with trash, tents and people. I've responded countless times both inside and outside of the Nav Center for overdoses, deaths (presumably from overdoses), gunshot wounds, stabbings, murders/suicides (from gunshot wounds and stabbings), assaults both amongst themselves and against random citizens trying to walk by, a several hour long police standoff with a gunman in a tent making threats, large structure fires to adjacent and nearby buildings, etc.

Looking in through the glass wall entry area, the facility may appear relatively clean and in order. Please don't let that fool you. Much of the space inside of the center appears as it does on the outside. The conditions in the communal living quarters are horder-like. We frequently have to enter these areas when responding to calls for overdoses, suicidal situations and assaults. The floor often cannot be seen beneath the piles of trash, belongings, bodies, etc. There's been several times where we've shown up to resuscitate an O.D. patient and we can't even find the person. It's only after raising our voice to ask something like, "where is she?! Where is she?!!!" that a roommate mumbles without urgency something like, "I think she's back there." But then we have to actually attempt to get to her which is no easy task. During one such call, I found myself looking down as I attempted to cross this sea of stuff without getting poked by a needle or stepping on a person passed out in my path. In so doing, I failed to notice what was above me until my partner called it to my attention. Stuck into the drop tile ceiling above us were dozens of needles. We quickly backed out. Riding back down to the lobby, we read signs posted inside the elevator to the residents from the staff advising them to come to the lobby or call _____ if you need more needles, pipes or bubbles (I'm still not sure what a bubble is). I seriously suggest that anyone who thinks this should happen in Shoreline should first arrange a field-trip to this facility.

When I recently heard about the plan to implement a Navigation Center in my hometown of Shoreline, I was

deeply saddened and concerned. It would be a total disservice both to the neighborhood as well to the people we are attempting to help. I am convicted by my faith as well as my own moral conscience to serve the poor and to love my neighbor as my self. It's why I became a firefighter. I strongly believe that we should make every effort to help all of our people, particularly the vulnerable and suffering populations (the sick, the afflicted, the homeless, the downcast, etc.). We must bring hope in the midst of despair and be a light in the darkness of this community. Because that is what I believe, I think that it would be a grievous mistake to go through with this plan. To be clear, my opposition to this plan is based strictly on the short-sited model of the Navigation Center. It is NOT a concern simply about it's location and how it directly effects me or the way of life that I feel "entitled" to. That's not who I am, and I realize that sacrifices are necessary even if it disrupts our comforts and routines. In fact, Shoreline is now my home-away-from-home. Though I still have lots of family there, my family and I have chosen to live in Snohomish county. So that's not the issue that I have with it. The issue is, how can we best serve the people that need help? This "No-barrier" model will only make the problems that these people are facing much worse. In addition, I feel that it will have a very detrimental impact on our community and the safety of it's citizens and first responders. PLEASE reconsider! Thank you.

Respectfully,
Neil Junkin