

Craig, Sondra

From: Corrine Holtz <tcjj23511@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:49 PM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Fwd: Concern for the Homeless Encampment Options

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August 6, 2024

Mark Neumann, Council Member

Mitch Reynolds, Mayor

Members of the Common Council

Re: Homeless Encampment Options

Dear Council,

I am writing to express the many feelings I have regarding the Homeless Encampment research and discussion that will be in front of the common council on Thursday, August 8. I am concerned that most of the locations in the proposal are in or near residential areas that are heavily populated with young families or senior citizens and that the resolution does nothing to address the actual problem.

The location on 33rd Street is near my home. This is a neighborhood that is made up of mostly senior citizens and a large number of young families. Additionally, is this what we want as a first impression to visitors as they enter our city?

Erickson Park is located next to an elementary school. Exposing young elementary children to the homeless population should not be an option. The additional suggestion to use the Erickson Pool bathroom and shower facilities is also not giving any consideration to the many families of La Crosse. Erickson Pool has been considered the "flagship" swimming pool for a number of years. I regularly visited Erickson Pool with my two boys for swimming lessons, log-rolling and to swim during their younger years. They worked there during the last four summers as lifeguards, swim instructors and pool attendants. The pool was closed this summer for maintenance that has yet to be started as of the writing of this letter. Is the lack of supposed work to be done poor planning on the part of the city or a strategic move to use the location for the homeless? As stated in the report, past experience has shown any facilities used by the homeless will be destroyed and require massive cleanup and/or rebuilding of structures. Destroying a community swimming pool that should be available to the tax paying and contributing families of La Crosse should not be a consideration.

Our community must stop enabling the homeless population and take steps to resolve the problem. Past attempts to assist the homeless population to find jobs and housing to become persons who contribute to our community have not been followed through on. There are plenty of services that have been offered to “the 230 individuals living in the La Crosse community without permanent and secure housing”. The majority of the homeless population chooses not to take action to better their situation. Consequences of that choice should result in notice that services will not be provided past a set period of 30-60 days. Continuing to provide services with no demand for accountability or action from the person accepting those services has clearly exasperated the homeless situation and become an invitation for others to come to La Crosse to take advantage of the situation. Those services are not free to anyone who has a job and pays taxes in this city. It makes me sad that La Crosse has become a community that cares more about the homeless and throwing our tax dollars away while watching people destroy our community and its facilities than looking out for our actual tax paying citizens that are contributing to make this a better place.

Sincerely,

Corrine Holtz

Concerned, Working and Tax-Paying Parent, Wife, and Community Member