

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Jason Conrad and not long ago, I was homeless. I was on and off the streets for 8-9 years. I know firsthand how hard it is to move forward in life when you don't have a place to sleep, a door to lock, or a place to just be. Today, I'm housed, stable, and rebuilding my life—but I couldn't have gotten here without support and someone willing to give me a chance.

That's why I'm writing in strong support of the Pathway-Held Lease Program being proposed.

This program is exactly the kind of pathway people like me need. Not everyone coming out of homelessness needs intense services. Many of us are ready to live independently—we just need a safe, supported starting point and someone willing to take a chance while we rebuild. A City-held lease provides that foundation. It allows people to:

- Build positive rental history, often for the first time in years.
- Prove themselves as good tenants, without being immediately judged by past evictions, criminal history or credit issues.
- Work toward independence, with clear steps and supportive accountability.
- Stabilize in housing, while continuing to work, heal, and plan for the future.

I've seen so many people, including myself in the past, held back because landlords won't take a chance on someone with no current housing, even when they're ready and able to pay rent and take care of a home. A program like this removes that first barrier and builds a bridge—for both the tenant and the landlord and because the City is holding the lease, it offers landlords peace of mind with guaranteed rent and support behind the scenes if problems arise.

This is a chance for people to reclaim their lives with dignity and responsibility. I'm proof that when someone is given stable housing and the right level of support, they don't just survive—they thrive. This program would have done so much for me at the time I was looking for a

place as I was in a good spot in my life, but unfortunately, landlords were not willing to accept my applications due to my lack of rentals and other factors.

Thank you for considering this important investment in our community. With the right structures in place, we can end homelessness—not just by getting people into housing, but by setting them up to succeed.

I have also attached a picture of myself while at Driftless Recovery and a write up they did for me prior to my move into my own apartment (see below).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Conrad". The signature is stylized with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jason Conrad



Tonight at our sober house meeting we had the bittersweet experience of saying goodbye to Jason. Jason is a warrior and a great example of self discipline, personal accountability, drive, and dedication to his recovery. He pivots to the positive when met with adversity and works the problem without a complaint. Jason has been with us at the house for 11 months. Prior to the house he was homeless for years and struggled significantly with substance misuse. In his 11 months at the house he has gone back to school at WTC and completed his GED, got back to working 40+ hours per week earning a phenomenal wage with a major employer,, has remained 100% sober the entire time, and has saved enough money to now take the next step into his own house. We couldn't be more proud of you, Jason. Keep on being you!

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