

Craig, Sondra

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It's deplorable to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on security guards to harass park users rather than spend money to prevent homelessness or provide housing. This is throwing good money after bad.

Roughly 80% of the eviction filings in La Crosse County are of City residents, and for this amount of money we could probably get close to paying off the owed rent for every one of them who can't afford it. Or we could rent apartments for about 25 people who are currently sleeping outside.

It was really astounding to hear Chris Kahlow in an interview a few weeks ago try to explain why the plan of letting people camp until the emergency shelter is up and running, as per Pathways Home, wouldn't work. Her reasoning? None. None whatsoever. Just "it wasn't working".

I take this camping ban and the requisite violence to be a message from the City that Pathways Home is dead.

Are we going to actually solve the problem, or just push it under the rug, pretend people who are facing homelessness are from "somewhere else", pretend it's not our problem, inflict violence after violence after violence, and wonder why we still have poverty?

Those of you who say poverty isn't our problem, look at this price tag and say that again with a straight face. Those of you who say we've already done all we can, you make me laugh. One million dollars per year is all it would take to provide housing for every homeless City resident, but you say we're broke while spending millions and millions on unneeded street upgrades. City residents complain about crime and a police shortage, and then you waste police time and City money with these atrocious clearances and harassment of homeless people.

Sort out your priorities.

Kevin Hundt