

## Craig, Sondra

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**From:** Katlyn Becker <katlynbecker@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 8, 2023 4:35 PM  
**To:** ZZ City Clerk External  
**Subject:** Letter for meeting 6/8/23

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To whom it may concern:

Homelessness and poverty are both very complex issues. As a person who has previously worked directly with the unsheltered population and continues to work indirectly with the unsheltered population, I feel very passionately about our unsheltered neighbors having the dignity and respect to continue to live amongst our community without being criminalized for existing.

Homelessness has always been prevalent in our community, but it has been tucked away at times such as when "Tent City" existed beyond Riverside north. Since the pandemic and the uncertainty of economic times and resources, unsheltered individuals have been placed in hotels, shelters, grouped at parks, and in many more situations. This has made the housing situation more of an obvious problem in the city which could be beneficial for helping our unsheltered neighbors. Unfortunately, this has also been a way for our unsheltered neighbors to experience additional discrimination just by merely existing due to socioeconomic status, mental or physical disability, substance use issues, or simply fear mongering by individuals.

When our unsheltered community members are ticketed for existing in a public space it perpetuates the cycle of filling our jail system. If a person is not able to afford housing, clothing, food, or any other basic necessities, how is that person supposed to afford a fine? This will further add to a person's criminal background which can add additional barriers to finding housing. People who have never experienced housing insecurity may not understand the barriers involved with finding housing with a criminal background or an eviction on the background.

As well as adding charges and fines, this further separates people who experience mental health or substance use issues from getting additional help or resources. Multiple outreach teams are in the parks and on the streets looking for people who need additional resources or additional access to care. There is not a magical response to homelessness. Creating more barriers and separation between the city and citizens who are facing housing instability is not a way to find a solution to help with housing or resources for our neighbors who are unsheltered. I implore you to vote no, and instead to continue to unify our community and help each other instead of create more barriers and separation.

Respectfully,  
Katlyn Becker