

From: [Marianne Nelson](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: Items 899-903
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Although these key actions are well intended, I object to the idea of an overall ban on unsanctioned camping and large camps. I urge you to consider the items in the proposal by county commissioner Jayapal instead.

1. **Expedite production of affordable housing.** Easing permitting processes, land banking, working with private and public partners to quickly convert vacant office space - all are important to pursue with urgency. Enlist and support private developers in the cause. While our nonprofit housing partners are essential to this work, private developers are also interested in working with public partners on solutions. We need all hands on deck.
2. **Move aggressively to secure already available units to house people.** Other cities use a centralized real-estate focused agency to recruit and incentivize landlords, and connect them with homeless services providers and their clients. With this approach, we can add hundreds of housing units to the available inventory, and move hundreds of people directly from the streets to housing - in the same amount of time it will take to create the mass encampments.
3. **Enforce a clearly defined camping ban in locations that create specific health, safety, or other issues.** This would include proximity to schools and shelters, or locations that create physical risk for campers. In locations where people are allowed to camp, provide hygiene facilities and trash pick-up. Take action on clearly illegal activity or health and safety violations.
4. **Create a diversion program for low-level offenses.** These offenses are often committed by people experiencing extreme poverty, homelessness, and/or untreated mental health or substance use issues. Offer in-depth case management and connection to services as an alternative to arrest and/or jail. Her team recently briefed the Mayor's office on this proposal .

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