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To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Cc: erikc@SchnitzerProperties.com
Subject: Mayor's Homelessness Plan Testimony
Date: Tuesday, October 25, 2022 7:44:14 AM

I am excited that there is finally a “Homeless Plan” but have the following comments and questions about the plan:

The resolutions:

1. Establish key actions to increase affordable housing construction

Reduce the 5-year average waiting lists to get into affordable housing by catalyzing the construction of 20,000 units of housing by 2033. Key actions include identifying and land-banking up to 400 publicly owned sites that are shovel-ready for development, speeding permitting of nonprofit and private multifamily housing developments, and requesting assistance from the Oregon Governor and State Legislature to increase statewide funding and expand local options to fund affordable housing. Our homeless problem cannot be solved by primarily focusing on developing affordable housing. Housing affordability is a factor in homelessness but not the primary factor. Mental health, Trauma, low job skills, and drug and alcohol addiction are the primary factors and providing permanent housing will not solve the problem unless a plan for solving the underlying mental health, Trauma, low job skills, and drug and alcohol addiction causes are not resolved prior. If you put a sick person in a well house, the house will become sick.

2. Assess options to increase coordination and enhance unhoused access to paid non-standard work

Work with partners to assess and explore a system to better structure gig and itinerant work (non-standard work) so that the needs of workers are prioritized, and more people can successfully participate in, benefit from, and advance in the labor market.

Chronic homeless will not be prepared to perform independent “GIG” work without structure. Creative idea but not practicle.

3. Connect mental health and substance abuse recovery services to unhoused individuals

Change City’s outdoor camping protocols to better connect homeless individuals with available sanitary, mental health, and substance abuse recovery services and banning self-sited encampments with designated alternative locations (e.g., emergency shelter, Safe Rest Villages, designated sanctioned campsites).

We need Shelters not camps. To prepare people for recovery services, they need to be in buildings and in community not alone in tents and camps. Tiny homes where people are alone is also not good. They need community living where they can be monitored, supported and living in community to create positive human connection. Without this, mental health and recovery services will not be very successful.

4. Create a diversion program for individuals experiencing homelessness

Request assistance from stakeholders, including the Multnomah County District Attorney (“MCDA”) and other experts providing community-based homeless, mental health and substance abuse recovery services, to create a services diversion program by offering people cited for low level offenses more opportunities to address pending legal issues and related collateral consequences outside of the criminal legal system.

Diversion yes but must have accountability. Lack of enforcing laws and regulations is not diversion, it is lawlessness. Diversion needs consequences of not following expectations.

5. Set City budget priorities to implement affordable housing, connect homeless individuals with sanitary, mental health and substance abuse recovery services and request assistance from County, Metro, State, and Federal partners.

If the plan is asking for more money, even if it is looking to the state or Fed, that is not an answer. We need accountability of the billions spent to date with no improvement in the situation.

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