

From: [Vikki Payne](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Cc: [Wheeler, Mayor](#)
Subject: Comments on Unsanctioned Camping Ban
Date: Wednesday, October 26, 2022 1:22:04 PM

The resolutions:

- [Build more affordable housing, specifically 20,000 more units by 2033](#)
- [Increase opportunities for non-standard work](#)
- [Ban camping and provide designated sanctioned campsites instead](#)
- [Create a diversion program for people cited with low level offenses](#)
- [Make sure the city budget can support all the elements of the plan](#)

Dear City Council & Mayor Wheeler:

I fully support these resolutions and I hope you will as well. Nowhere in this plan do I see anything that 'criminalizes' homelessness, but instead offers a safer, healthier interim solution to the freestyle camping on the streets that allows the homeless population to be exploited and harmed. Campers have repeatedly asked for sanctioned areas to park or set up their tents so they can live without worrying about being swept. It has to be much cheaper and easier for the city and nonprofits to attend to these folks if they are in designated areas versus trying to find them in the woods.

This will obviously help get the city cleaned up so our sidewalks and green spaces are once again clean and safe for neighbors, both housed and unhoused, to enjoy again. This will curb the illegal residential dumping that is happening at unsanctioned camping sites. And this will encourage the criminal class who are using these illegal campsites as a cover to move on out of our city.

Offering a variety of options to street campers is a legal, safe and healthy thing to do. Those who refuse should not be extended other rights; those who are demanding the government leave them alone / grant them a land trust should not be tolerated in our city. We have a societal agreement, and those who do not want to be a part of our society should be appeased and get to enjoy the luxuries of our society if they are choosing to willingly not participate. It can be easily assumed that these are the folks committing crimes against others to make a 'living'. Worse, if they are living off of federal tax dollars, they should be participating in our society in a meaningful way. Job training programs and partnerships with corporations that are struggling to hire (food service & retail in particular) should be in the works. Public works programs should be considered - it has been proven time and again if a person feels they have something to contribute that it improves their mental well being and willingness to participate in society again.

I strongly recommend inviting federal warrant sweeps during the campsite clearings to also help deal with the criminal class so that they are not just escaping to other parts of our state / country, similar to what San Francisco did in the Tenderloin. We've seen too many bad things happen with folks running from the law in other states in

our news headlines already - we have an opportunity to right those wrongs during cleanup.

Thank you,

Vikki Payne