

From: [Todd Blickenstaff](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Cc: [Andrew Hoan](#); [Jon Isaacs](#); [Tim Leavitt](#)
Subject: Portland Mayor Wheeler’s agenda items 899-903, homeless and affordable housing proposal.
Date: Wednesday, October 26, 2022 4:34:47 PM

Portland City Council:

Although my schedule did not allow me to testify in person before the Portland City Council on Wednesday, October 26th, I want to express my support for the welcome and overdue new proposal by Portland Mayor Wheeler’s agenda items 899-903: homeless and affordable housing proposal.

As a member of the Portland Business Alliance housing and land use committee for the past 5 years, I am passionate about getting people safely off the streets, off drugs and alcohol, and into appropriate recovery facilities. I am pleased to hear that apparently, all three candidates for Governor and both candidates for County Chair support this proposal. I am pleased to hear that Mayor Wheeler’s proposal will include a focus on a series of projects and actions to fast-track the construction of affordable housing and move homeless Portlanders closer to services.

I don’t understand why these designated alternative locations thus far have not included Wapato/Bybee Lakes facility as the prioritized first site. Then Senator Betsy Johnson helped pave the way for the Wapato/Bybee Lakes facility to serve as a successful facility to both house and provide treatment for the homeless population suffering from drug abuse after seeing how successful the same organization had been operating a similar facility in Tillamook County. There is still available space at Bybee Lakes, which is covered, and heated with WIFI! (originally designed as a prison but never used until Jordan Schnitzer bought it), and never used as a homeless facility by the Portland City government, despite having stood empty for a decade until recently. As a PBA housing and land use committee member, I personally asked Sam Adams of Mayor Wheeler’s office and a representative of Commissioner Dan Ryan’s city council why they haven’t led with Wapato/Bybee Lakes as a homeless facility during their separate respective testimonies to our committee. But we received no definitive responses and no promised follow-up from either of them. Certainly, a facility like Wapato/Bybee Lakes is far superior to the sprawling tent cities that Portland is currently saddled with.

Following approval of Portland Mayor Wheeler’s current proposal hope that the next step of Mayor Wheeler along with whoever becomes our next elected Governor will seek to repeal Measure 110, which did much additional damage to Portland and the state of Oregon to decriminalize hard drugs (meth, heroin, cocaine), compounded with the delay in funding the actual \$200+ million drug treatment portion. How could anyone think that decriminalizing hard drugs like methamphetamine and heroin could be a positive move? I believe that it is critical that Mayor Wheeler’s proposal **not** allow those homeless individuals suffering from drug and alcohol abuse to remain on the streets. Any option that these people choose to follow should include mandatory treatment for these addictions.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments and suggestions, and, again, I want to express my support for Portland Mayor Wheeler’s homeless and affordable housing proposal.

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