

**From:** [Emily Norquist](#)  
**To:** [Council Clerk – Testimony](#); [Commissioner Hardesty](#); [Wheeler, Mayor](#); [Commissioner Rubio](#); [Commissioner Mapps](#); [Commissioner Ryan Office](#)  
**Subject:** Testimony against City Ordinance 901  
**Date:** Thursday, November 3, 2022 1:58:30 PM

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Dear City Commissioners and Mayor Wheeler,

I am writing in regards to City Ordinance 901. My name is Emily Norquist and I am a graduate student in public health at the PSU-OHSU School of Public Health. I live in northeast Portland.

In public health courses, one of the most frequently emphasized principles is *listening to communities and honoring their needs*. It is incoherent to think that a public health intervention that does not align with the visions, needs, and desires of community members will be effective. Were we to propose something such as City Ordinance 901 as a "solution" to homelessness, we would undoubtedly be met with significant criticism. Furthermore, there is ample literature demonstrating alternatives to the proposal laid forth by Mayor Wheeler and Commissioner Ryan.

I've heard it on social media, I've heard it from my houseless neighbors, I've heard it on the news, I've heard it from the ACLU: this is a Bad Idea.

I'm writing to uplift the following asks in order to ensure that the City does not condone and participate in a mass traumatization of members of an already traumatized community.

- Wheeler and Ryan must be transparent and democratic in this process and all other city processes
- We must fully fund [Move in Multnomah](#) style programs NOW as more permanent housing is built
- The city must create a plan for at least 5000 units of housing for those who are chronically unsheltered. Right now much of the affordable housing that is underway does not provide the assistance and no income situations that chronically unsheltered people face. We will not solve houselessness on the streets until we get serious about creating long term housing that will allow people who have experienced chronic houselessness to go inside, stabilize, and recover from the extended trauma and poverty we have allowed in our City.

Thank you for your time.

-Emily Norquist