

From: [Joanna Cain](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Subject: End illegal camping on city streets and property
Date: Monday, October 24, 2022 11:29:36 AM

To: City Council Members

As a retired physician, I have had sympathy for the poor health care and plight of the homeless but the city and county response has been nothing short of worthless and placed the most vulnerable at even greater harm by leaving them on the street or allowing them to return. The shelter camps are a positive event but way too little and way too late.

Coming down to our home near the South waterfront, one of these campers now back after having been removed, wandered randomly near the busy street and then on to it. It was clear that there was little orientation to place, person, time or anything else most likely due to drug use. This is not the first time, and a driver going faster would have likely hit him. We have grieved as young friends have moved away from Portland because they don't feel it is a safe community for their children, for going on the treasured bike rides or walks specifically because of these illegal camps and interactions with the inhabitants, and it is entirely due to failures to provide alternatives, despite huge influx of funds from citizens. Our city has become dirty and unsafe and you only have to look at the occupancy rate downtown to see the negative spiral that this has begun.

So, there is no more time for a 6 month or 8 month or 18 month plan, and the Joint office with the county has not provided solutions which now must be emergent and iterative. It is critical that PORTLAND act, and separately from the county if need be, to immediately (not in 3 or 6 months) remove campers (to a joint campground if that is all that is available after all the time and \$ already past), provide appropriate social services/ mental health and drug/substance abuse/ addiction services at all sites, and clean up the streets so we can rebuild Portland again. In addition, refocusing policing services and restoring the police force (hire well qualified and community trained police) to community policing to engage with neighborhoods and identify problems early would augment this move.

Please act quickly, act now, or we truly will lose not only the Portland we love, but also the lives of more of those houseless and vulnerable.

Thank you.
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