

From: Sage Turner
Sent: 4/11/2021 1:45:15 PM
To: "Kurt Thaesler" <kurt.thaesler@gmail.com>
Cc: ashevillencouncil@ashevillenc.gov
Subject: Re: camp eviction

Thank you for reaching out, Kurt. It is indeed sad and challenging. We are working feverishly on short and long term solutions. Unfortunately, some of the camps have become unsafe for even the campers. The calls for assistance are growing. We've got local specialists visiting camps, working diligently to offer help and other options. We're working with partners on converting another hotel into a shelter and you may know that we're currently providing shelter at the Ref Roof Inn as well. We got Beloved, aHope, Pisgah, and Homeward Bound funded and working like every day heroes to help both the unhoused and those teetering on homelessness. Until we have enough beds and care for everyone, we will fall short of being to help everyone. We also need wrap around services. Health related, mental and physical, addiction services, group support, and job training, etc. Please, if you know any churches or other orgs that can join in the help, get them in touch with Homeward Bound or us.

We will also continue to work on housing inventory and housing affordability. Our region has 13 tax credit project applications out this year for affordable housing complexes. They won't all be funded but hopefully a couple a year will. There are also a couple non tax credit projects in the works. We're on target to open doors on over 1,000 affordable apartments by 2024. Frankly, we'll need more than that. The Rescue Plan monies might really help us work on the unhoused in the meantime. This Tuesday we have a budget session (recorded and streamed) and we'll hear more about the Rescue Plan options.

Thank you again for caring and reaching out.

Sage

On Sun, Apr 11, 2021 at 11:15 AM Kurt Thaesler <kurt.thaesler@gmail.com> wrote:

I'm saddened to hear that the city is again "addressing" homelessness by reducing the visibility and increasing the hardship of our community members who are suffering the most. As I'm sure you're aware, displacing them doesn't solve the problem.

The city's official response to the last eviction on Lexington Ave seemed to shift the blame to the DOT. However, the next planned actions at Aston Park and MLK Park will fall squarely on the shoulders of the city.

I'm glad to hear some work is being done to collaborate with nonprofit shelters and other community partners. But at the end of the day, I'm struggling to imagine any long-term solution that doesn't center around expanding the supply of free and subsidized housing programs. Please reconsider your response to the housing crisis in this city. It's sad that many citizens only see this as an eyesore or a nuisance, without giving a thought to the severe hardships that people in camps face every day. We must work to support and assist all members of our community.

Thank you for your continued efforts on this complex and challenging issue.

Kurt Thaesler

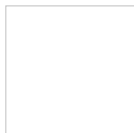
On Tue, Feb 2, 2021, 7:52 PM <esthermanheimer@avlcouncil.com> wrote:

Thank you for writing to me about your concerns regarding the removal of the encampment of houseless individuals in Asheville. I am sorry this happened and I apologize on behalf of the City. The City's administration has reviewed this incident and released the below explanation and commitment to improve the City's efforts to support those experiencing homelessness.

<https://www.ashevillenc.gov/news/a-message-to-our-community-regarding-removal-of-homeless-camp/>

Thank you,

Esther



Esther Manheimer

Mayor, City of Asheville

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From: Kurt Thaesler <kurt.thaesler@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, February 2, 2021 12:26 PM

To: ashevillencouncil@ashevillenc.gov

Subject: Lexington ave camp

I'm shocked and disgusted at the treatment of homeless people who were camping under the 240 bridge over Lexington Ave.

As one of the artists who conceptualized and painted the mural on that bridge, our vision was one of community, people carrying about each other, celebrating Asheville residents from all walks of life.

The middle of winter in the middle of a pandemic is not the right time to be displacing the homeless. These are the people among us who have the least resources and the most problems. The role of the city cannot and should not be making things harder for them.