

To: Jenny Durkan, Seattle City Council Members, and North Seattle Police Staff:

I have been a resident of Licton Springs since 2012 and am near the Licton Springs low-barrier homeless encampment.

The City of Seattle is openly condoning illicit drug use and subsidizing it through its permitting of the low-barrier encampment: "It is the only one so far that will accept drinkers and drug users who don't plan to quit." – Source: <http://komonews.com/news/local/concerns-raised-over-seattles-low-barrier-homeless-camp>

One of the criterion set by the city for the encampment's renewal is:

*"Are there significant unforeseen impacts on the surrounding community that are directly attributed to the presence of the permitted encampment village?"*

Crime has increased substantially since the camp's opening in late March 2016. This is supported anecdotally by those who live in the immediate vicinity surrounding the encampment; and empirically, with data from SPD's crime report database.

#### **Objective, Data-driven Evidence:**

- Licton Springs crime increase is statistically significant with a z-score of 3.95, nearly 4 standard deviations from the mean
- Licton Springs N3 subset (85<sup>th</sup>-90<sup>th</sup>, Fremont-Interlake) had a 34% increase in crime from 2015 – 2016, but saw a **194%** increase 2016 – 2017
- N3 now leads all Seattle beats in crime reporting in 2017, whereas it was middle of pack in 2016
- Neighboring beats J1, J2, J3, and L2 saw a deceleration of crime increase, whereas Licton Spring subset and N3 saw an acceleration in the rate of change YoY
- N3 Car Prowls up 76% YoY, 2016 – 2017
- N3 Stolen Property up 134% YoY, 2016 – 2017
- N3 Theft Increased 112% YoY, 2016 – 2017
- N3 Narcotics increased 198% YoY, 2016 – 2017

#### **Anecdotal Experience Validated by SPD Crime Report Data:**

##### *Personal:*

- Finding trespassers/thieves in my yard in broad daylight
- Trash left by people squatting on the side of my house
- Used needles found outside by my bedroom window
- Car broken into
- Drug addicts shooting up behind my townhouse quadrant's bushes
- Armed burglar captured in my neighbor's yard after throwing gun under car across street
- Package prowlers – was told not to follow since their pimp/drug lord are usually watching and armed by non-emergency line
- Jack-in-the-Box had to hire private security after the encampment opened as their parking lot became breeding ground for crime

##### *Captured on Video by Neighbors:*

- Sex transactions (in the act of) on public sidewalks and in front of neighbor's garages
- Numerous car break-ins; garage break-ins
- Active drug use in public on private and public property
- Drug deals
- Trespassing, package theft, property damage
- Defecation in yards
- Bike chop shops directly outside the encampment

Both the code and the PDF output is available to the public on GitHub here:

[https://github.com/FourZeroFourError/Licton\\_Springs\\_Crime/blob/master/output/Licton\\_Springs\\_Crime.pdf](https://github.com/FourZeroFourError/Licton_Springs_Crime/blob/master/output/Licton_Springs_Crime.pdf)

The data was pulled using Python and analyzed in R. There is a disparity between the 911 calls database and the SPD crime report database (pictured below). SPD Crime Reports were used since they are initial reports filed by police.

Year	Zone.Beat	Reports.Name	Reports	Responses.911.Calls.Name	Responses.911.Calls
2015	N3	NARCOTICS	34	NARCOTICS COMPLAINTS	192
2016	N3	NARCOTICS	176	NARCOTICS COMPLAINTS	239
2017	N3	NARCOTICS	521	NARCOTICS COMPLAINTS	256

Year	Zone.Beat	Reports.Name	Reports	Responses.911.Calls.Name	Responses.911.Calls
2015	N3	CAR PROWL	297	CAR PROWL	262
2016	N3	CAR PROWL	420	CAR PROWL	231
2017	N3	CAR PROWL	742	CAR PROWL	198

Aurora has always been a hot spot for crime; however, the crime stayed on Aurora in the motels and empty parking lots. This is reflected in the attached YoY crime density heat maps, which are mapped to the 100-block. The only crime I dealt with prior to the encampment's opening was a stolen package. The fact that neighboring beats on Aurora saw a decrease in the rate of change for crime increase between 2016 and 2017, while N3's crime increase nearly doubled in rate of change YoY for the same period reveals it wasn't crime on Aurora causing the increase to the Licton Springs community.

These temporary shelters are being used as long-term shelters, which will be the case if the permit is renewed. Since they are not permanent shelters, you are inviting the spread of disease into the neighborhood, which has higher incidences than the general population due to drug use, sexual habits, and sanitation issues. Moreover, when people are allowed to defecate on people's property, our neighborhood will potentially have to deal with related disease outbreaks, potential needle sticks and grey death (no touch required to be lethal), toxic waste, etc...

Also, since it is low-barrier and located on Aurora, you are neither helping the campers or the neighborhood residents. Would you host an AA meeting inside of a bar? Likewise, placing drug addicts on Aurora is not helpful to the addicts. Instead, you've concentrated a customer-base for drug dealers and provided pimps with an already vulnerable population to work for them. Lawlessness begets lawlessness – apparent in the crime report data. Since the campers are not allowed to do drugs on premise, they merely go into the neighborhood to shoot-up. There needs to be an incentive to get out of homelessness for those who are able, and by allowing drug abuse, what incentive is there? If we don't stop the drug use, we will end up with more people with irreversible mental disorders. Seattle is festering with a drug problem – and it will only get worse – unless we start focusing on prevention, detox, and rehab. Understaffed police shouldn't have to babysit the drug addicts as they do on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Pine and in Licton Springs.

I'd implore the City of Seattle, and Washington State, to look at long-term solutions, instead of expanding and continuing an ineffective and destructive low-barrier program.

#### Possible Solutions to Explore:

- Assist veterans with getting the right documentation in order to receive vet services. If necessary, increase vet services (8% of the homeless are veterans)
- Open facilities designed to treat concurrent conditions: substance abuse and mental health
- Increase funding in programs such as United Way's Job Connect, similar to Albuquerque's "There's a Better Way" program
- Increase funding for detox and rehabilitation programs (with focus on long-term follow-up as studies show recovery is a multi-year process)
- Provide temporary housing for domestic violence victims and vocational program training
- Increase regulation on prescription narcotics/opiates
- Mental health facilities are lacking in WA state: work on ending the homeless, arrested, jailed, released back to streets cycle due to not enough room (personal experience with this in my own family)

I'd like to create a win-win situation. Currently, it is a no-win situation. I am against the renewal of the low-barrier encampment for the reasons cited above.

Hoping for the best for all Seattle residents,

Amber Matthai

