

From: [Amy Glasser](#)
To: [Cathy Halka](#)
Subject: Homeless in winter and now
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Dear workgroup members, It has been 4 years since the issue of winter and homelessness was brought to the attention of the council and community. Before then everyone was content with using the Lighthouse Mission as the winter resource for those freezing on the streets despite the fact that it was and is a religious organization that does not use the Housing First Model of solving homelessness. For the past 4 years the council has heard from countless community members about how the LMM is not an accessible facility for many of the homeless residents of Whatcom County. You know the issues as they have been discussed probably hundreds of times including: assaults, religious discrimination, LGBTQ discrimination, racial discrimination, gender discrimination, thefts, favoritism, those with major mental health problems, uncontrollable substance abuse problems, and lifetime trespasses.

This does not include the hundreds of people who just can't go there even if they wanted to because they are couples and families dependent on each other because the LMM separates males and females. Not allowing one's pets is also an obstacle as most people, no matter who they are, would never leave their pets outside just so they could be warm.

Lastly the LMM even with its overflow capacity in no way can accommodate over 700 counted homeless folks in our community.

If the eviction ban by the State is stopped at the end of the year, many more families and individual will become homeless adding to this crisis in the dead of winter. It's November and once again you have left the cold weather emergency response to the control of the LMM. Are you friggin kidding? Are you all deaf or what? Do you know people have already been turned away due to a lack of mats available? Are you prepared to live with warented guilt you will feel when people die on the streets again because you did not take this crisis seriously once again and now we have Covid to add to the emergency.

Use Covid and winter crisis money for building pallet homes behind the courthouse, behind the 911 office and at the clean green site. Staff them with temporary staff and unemployed social workers. Also provide vouchers to the Nighttime Outreach Workers for motel rooms so they are available when offices are closed. You have yo remember the issues of the vouchers for the past few winters. Don't make the same mistakes again.

Have a city paid worker manage the coordinating of the vouchers (not the LMM) and pallet program and start it tomorrow. Act as if we have been hit with a catastrophe because to the homeless, we have. Amy Glasser