

On Mar 15, 2021, at 6:27 PM, Anderson, Lisa A. <[laanderson@cob.org](mailto:laanderson@cob.org)> wrote:

Greetings [REDACTED]

Homeless camping is an issue all over town. We are seeing this in every park, along street sidewalks, along our creeks and in the woods. We tag them for removal, and some individuals move to a new location to start the process over again. For others, we may have more success connecting to a shelter and/or services.

After working to end the protest encampment in front of city hall, a group called the collective moved them to Geri Field. I think in front of City Hall we had up to 100 at the peak- which many individuals had left the low barrier drop in shelter to camp there. We were able to get some back to the shelter, some into tiny homes, but others decided to continue to band together- partially due to the ongoing food and material support being given to them by community members. Numbers seemed to be about 25 at Geri Field and the additional individuals may be the volunteer/activist (The Collective = BOP Mutual Aid) when on site.

I am not sure if those in Laurel Park are from Geri Field or just someone else moving from another location. It looks like most of the camp belongings/individuals are moving to Port property off of Cornwall Avenue. The city is working with the Port to address this larger encampment.

I know BPD did contact people at Laurel Park last night based on a video posted by the collective's call for "bodies" to show up to 'hold space' to protest what they refer to as a sweep. I was informed on the city's approach tomorrow to try to prevent moves to parks tomorrow based on the clean-up but have not heard what their approach will be for pre-camp clean up moves.

The city did have our outreach services make contact with the individuals at Geri Field (as they did at City Hall) to try to connect these individuals to services and shelter. We are also bringing in a new partner for tiny homes and services next month to help shelter individuals and move them into more stable housing.

Part of our efforts are a bit hampered due to covid and some restrictions. The larger camps can become a covid risk, and we can tag them for removal. Based on the CDC recommendations, single 'tents' should stay if they are not a risk to themselves or others. That can be up to interpretation as to what is a risk. It is also a recommendation and not a law (at least none that I have seen). We do have space in our drop in shelter, yet some individuals will not use this service. We are trying to expand other types of shelters in addition to using motel vouchers for families with children, elderly, domestic violence victims, and those with a disability. But... these services are not a 'no-barrier' as this group has been demanding.

I have not heard from city management (Council is legislative and do not direct the city department staff) what the plan will be for the camp in Laurel... or other parks across the city regarding flagging for removal. My understanding is that when we tag, they have a few days to move and, in the meantime, we send in the homeless outreach team to try to make contact. But... this process is often complaint driven.

As far as doing nothing. Unfortunately, there is a process. I know the city staff have a plan for tomorrow, and they will be geared up with staff across multiple departments. I hope the preparations will work out as planned. But for camping before the clean-up, I would assume that falls into the description above.

I will be following up with the Mayor's office and the Parks Department to see what their plans are for not only Laurel Park but a few other locations as well.

I wish I had a better more definitive answer for you.

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