

Dear Councilpersons Clark, Bagshaw, Burgess, Harrell, Rasmussen, Godden and Conlin:

Mid-day yesterday TV, Radio, and Newspaper Crews started showing up at Nickelsville to ask us questions about what you had done. Not one of you had informed us directly, or even sent a Courtesy Copy of your letter to the Mayor to Nickelsville. Finally we saw what the seven of you had signed. It was a shocking thing to see a letter from City Leaders that pretty much talked about us like some dogs in a kennel.

At our Nightly Meeting yesterday, the three of us were elected by the camp to make a simple initial response. This is it.

Humans have a basic right to stay together and safe. In Seattle the majority of the City Council has chosen to ignore and disrespect that basic right. As a result thousands of homeless people every night are isolated from community and at great risk. This is why Women in Black will be standing tomorrow for three more outdoor deaths of homeless people recently in King County.

Many times at Nickelsville we have seen families show up in the middle of the night with young children, tired and exhausted, after having shuffled through social services all day and gotten nothing from it. It is an honor to let them stay with us until something better is found. Without Nickelsville, where would they go? At Nickelsville we are never too full to admit another family - there isn't any other place in town like this.

Without even considering alternatives in a rational manner - like Councilman Licata tried to do - you have decided to shut our community down on September 1st come hell or highwater. Ironically if you had been willing to work with us we would have been able to move by now. What we've needed for two years is your recognition and acceptance. That would have brought running water and electricity, and police supporting our community.

Please understand that Nickelsville is sticking together. We'll move, as long as we've been treated with respect and have someplace to go. Any permanent housing your half a million dollars provides will be something to celebrate for those who get it, but a couple of months in a hotel isn't permanent housing, its a flop.

We remain open to talking with you at any time.

Sincerely,

Trace De Garmo, Don Nitter, and Michael E. Keever of Nickelsville