From: JOHN WOLVERTON
To: Grp. City Council and City Web Site; John Engen
Subject: Belated Public Comment: North / Johnson Winter Shelter And Social Service Operations
Date: Monday, October 18, 2021 9:33:56 PM

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

In your consideration of the city contract with the Poverello center for the Johnson / North winter shelter operations, I wish to reinforce the sentiments which you have heard about security - in the F2F (and Westside) neighborhoods in the vicinity of Poverello operations - being of utmost concern to many neighbors. I commend the city for contracting a security firm for that purpose and to provide our police with some relief and as well to provide EMS responders with an additional layer of protection.

I have conveyed other specific concerns and offered recommendations via the Big Sky PR consultant Tamari Clark, who is gathering feedback about neighborhood and community issues that arose last winter around North and Johnson Street.

But my purpose in commenting this evening is from a broader perspective which is important for city council, non-profits and especially people in Wards 1, 4, 5 and most of Ward 3 to come to understand. It is particularly about a trend regarding site selection for social services and low barrier housing. People in Missoula tend to be kind, considerate, volunteering, giving and charitable; however it seems that character in the last decade or so has shied away from sharing any real world on-the-street neighborhood burdens or exposure to social ills and housing needs.

I believe that this dynamic is profoundly expressed in two examples. One recent example was the overwhelming neighborhood push back to the addition of over 400 badly needed apartment units (for everyday people, not even low income) in lower Grant Creek. My other example is expressed in the list I've generated below which shows a geographically narrow swath of social service centers and low income housing generally from the area of the jail to Russell & West Broadway and down North Russell Street.

In short, it is well known that economic stratification is an unhealthy long-term paradigm for any community and I suggest that Missoulians should be watchful about traveling farther down the path illustrated by my list below. Please provide due consideration to what a perpetuation of this inequitable dynamic can mean for all our neighborhoods in the long-term.

Thank You,
John Wolverton
8th Street, Franklin to Fort.

I doubt this list is comprehensive, I don't know all of them.

Missoula County Jail
Work release program / correctional halfway house
Cornerstone and Valor House veterans housing (north of the jail)
Public assistance office and Child and Family Services (Palmer St)
Trinity Housing - Mullan / West Broadway - multiple layers of residential / social services
Trinity Housing - Cooley site
Equinox and Solstice
Sleepy Inn covid isolation hotel
Clark Fork Commons (land trust - perm affordable - ownership housing)
Poverello Center soup kitchen and shelter.

Bruce Blattner Apartments
Eagle Watch - accessible / affordable HUD housing.
The Bridge Apartments - WMMHC
Sweetgrass Commons - California Street - Homeword
Missoula Housing Authority #110 California Street
Western Montana Mental Health Center
Mental health crisis stabilization unit (short term residential)
WMMHC John Lynn Apartments - Dakota Street.
Fireweed Court on Russell - a Homeword project
Montana Street Homes (on Catlin) a Homeword project
Missoula Food Bank on Catlin - includes non-food social / health service offices.
Missoula Housing Authority Garden District Apartments on Catlin at Milwaukee Way
Salvation Army Senior Housing Apartments - probably a low income cohort
YWCA shelter on 3rd Street near Catlin (three blocks off Russell)
Bethel Baptist Church part-time clothing pantry (Washburn Street one block off Russell)
Open Aid Alliance / needle exchange - now on Ronan St.
North & Johnson City / Pov Winter Shelter