

From: [Dave Walia](#)
To: [*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)
Cc: [Mark Bartholomay](#); [Pete Stork](#); [Mahendra Nath](#)
Subject: Emergency Ordinance No. 20-36
Date: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 10:28:04 AM
Attachments: [STP City Announcement Received 4.25.22.pdf](#)

Dear City Council;

We received the attached notice in the mail yesterday (April 25th, 2022) concerning the Emergency Ordinance No. 20-36. We stand firmly opposed to any action to Readopt this ordinance. There are many reasons to our position, including:

- The fact that you fail to follow the laws and procedures for proper public notice and comment. This letter was mailed out on the same day that you cited as the deadline for written comment to be entered on the record. You have repeatedly not provided us (the neighborhood, residents and tax payers) any opportunity to voice our opinions on the subject matter. In the past you have ended meetings early, tabling this issue; only to find out you have then closed opportunity for public comment. And now you sent notice and once again refuse to listen to oppositional viewpoints. Zoning Laws are critical to maintaining order, property values and public safety and general welfare. Changes should be carefully considered out-in-the open and within the community – **NOT BEHIND CLOSED DOORS TO SERVE THE POLITICAL AMBITIONS OF ELECTED OFFICIALS.**
- The Mayor's Emergency Order for Covid is no longer in place, therefore "Emergency" changes to important ordinance such as the Zoning Codes are no longer necessary nor appropriate. Any changes to the zoning laws need to be thoroughly examined, properly vetted by all stakeholders and thoughtfully debated in the public domain.
 - You should also consider that the additional "emergency orders" that were enacted as a response to the pandemic created much of the problems you are now trying to solve. As a society, we have reviewed many of these policies and actions that were deemed necessary, critical and emergency responses. Most experts are realizing that these "knee jerk reactions" to COVID created more social harm than the pandemic itself. Please do not try to create another "emergency" action to solve the problem you created. Two wrongs almost never create a Right.
- I would challenge the underlying principle of why this "Emergency Ordinance" is needed and can it really lead to a solution to homelessness. No study has been presented that justifies smaller, fragmented shelters providing limited resources spread across a wider area of the city/county will truly address the root causes, or nature of homelessness. Many private industries have tried this approach to solve market problems (i.e. Blockbuster, Boston Markets, etc.) – most of them ended in bankruptcy even though they had plenty of capital funds.
 - When you implemented this Emergency Ordinance and allowed Freedom House, crime in the area skyrocketed to above +100% (vs. the prior period) as documented by the SPPD. The limited service, fragmented approach only congregates the problem in areas that do not have the resources to adequately deal with the problems. Furthermore, you had NO (ZERO) conditional use restrictions on their operations. They spent more

than 16 months telling you wanted you wanted to hear, but acting completely different. Our renters and residents were afraid to leave their residences due to the violence, crime and threats. **The Zoning Code is only meant to be modified where it increases the safety and general well-being of the area – that is written in the City Charter.**

- I would also challenge why this a city problem and not a county problem? The county has much more resources than the City to address the issue. Perhaps a more collaborative solution might render better outcomes.

Our company, residents and tenants are not opposed to addressing homelessness and helping those less fortunate. But the problem this Emergency Ordinance will create does more harm than it actually solves.

Sincerely,

Dave S. Walia
VP – Business Development
900 American Blvd. E., Suite 300
Bloomington, MN 55420
D (952) 853-1452
M (612)306-7777

