

The City of Burien is concerned by King County's recent announcement to close the King County District Court encampment. Despite claims of collaboration in the closure notice, Burien was neither informed nor involved in the encampment closure decision-making process, raising significant concerns for both the unhoused and Burien communities.

King County unilaterally permitted or hosted this encampment. King County unilaterally decided to fence it. King County unilaterally decided what services, if any, would be provided. In fact, the services were so lacking that Burien asked King County about its plan to install facilities for the unhoused after the King County District Court and King County Sheriff's Office in Burien closed its bathrooms to the unhoused. This "only King County matters approach" is like other unilateral King County decisions that involve and negatively impact Burien and its residents and businesses.

Here, while the encampment is King County's, on King County property, and presumably, the removal will involve King County deputies, its unilateral decision to close the encampment without any input or consultation from Burien officials raises serious questions, including:

- **Timeline for Closure:** When will King County's encampment close?
- **Outreach Efforts:** Is outreach limited to LEAD, REACH, and KCRHA?
- **Eligibility Criteria:** What were King County's criteria for the "shelter list?"
- **Fair Treatment:** King County had many ideas about how encampments and the unhoused should be handled, is King County following those processes or at least an equitable process?
- **Shelter Services:** While King County does not have to share this with Burien, will it reveal whether the unhoused receive adequate treatment services and shelter?
- **Type of Shelter:** What types of shelter are offered, and is it permanent or temporary?
- **Encampment Closure:** King County claims no new residents will be permitted. Is King County preventing new residents, and if so, how?
- **Post-Closure Site for the unhoused:** What will happen to individuals who remain in the encampment when it closes but are not included in King County/KCRHA's list? Where will they be placed?

It is disheartening to see King County disregard Burien's authority and need to protect its community while King County presents a façade of collaboration. Since King County controls the sheriff's deputies assigned to Burien, references to clearing or sweeping King

County's property should refer to the King County Sheriff's Office, not the "Burien Police Department."

Since Burien was not involved in the planning of King County's efforts and Burien has not approved the use of its name, marks, logo, etc., King County is not authorized to use the Burien Police Department's name, marks, logo, badges, or vehicles. Additionally, Burien has concerns about,

- **Financial Accountability:** King County/KCRHA and the King County Sheriff's Office should be financially responsible for clearing or sweeping the King County District Court encampment.
- **Local Law Enforcement Impact:** King County should use its deputies who are not assigned to Burien to clear or sweep the encampment on King County property. Deputies assigned to Burien should be doing Burien or contract-related law enforcement in our community during this operation.

Burien notes that King County and Sheriff Patricia Cole-Tindall are comfortable doing a version of what Ordinance 832 (unlawful public camping) provides for:

1. Burien prohibited unhoused people from staying on Burien's public property in certain areas but never said they had to leave all Burien property. King County is displacing or banishing the unhoused from King County property without any assurance they are hosting them at other King County properties. It appears unlikely that King County will host or shelter the unhoused since it cavalierly encourages some unhoused "to utilize other sleeping arrangements or locations."
2. Burien prohibited "camping" during the day and permitted it in nonprohibited locations from 7:00 pm to 6:00 am the following morning. King County is not permitting camping on its District Court property at any time.

King County and its sheriff have not:

1. Provided adequate due process since King County's closure notice has no removal date.
2. Ensured shelter to all unhoused individuals on their property as they claimed Burien should do. King County's closure notice expels King County's unhoused residents from King County property without offering all of them an alternative to living on Burien streets.
3. Been transparent or collaborative, abusing their discretion and ignoring Burien's authority to regulate within its borders without King County's interference.

The City of Burien is committed to helping the unhoused. In exchange, the Burien community deserves a truly coordinated approach to homelessness with an acknowledgment, financially and otherwise, that recognizes that Burien has not caused or exacerbated homelessness but is trying to help in a way that it believes is appropriate. If King County wants to try a different approach it has plenty of land to do it outside of Burien.