

May 1, 2020

Mayor Krewson and Alderwoman Ingrassia:

To say that the last week has been challenging is an understatement. Receiving news late on Sunday of Buder Rec Center being used for the unhoused, without any prior notice or discussion with the Gate District East Neighborhood Association, has caused incredible panic.

Regardless of where the idea of using Buder Rec started, it's baffling that our two elected officials were not seemingly in communication about the idea. Additionally, it's concerning that neither engaged with the GDEA prior to bringing this idea to fruition. Finding ways to adequately help the unhoused outside of a pandemic is challenging, so it's no surprise that it's even more challenging when there is a public health crisis. We have trouble understanding why you wouldn't consult with the Association before transferring the unhoused right in the middle of a residential neighborhood. You had to know this would create panic and concern of residents.

As we continue to watch Facebook live events and read news from various sources, we've already seen, in less than a week, the details change. 18 beds, 19 beds, 30-ish beds. Mayor Krewson shared there would be 24-hour security, 24-hour caregivers, and food brought in every day. We're told this shelter will not house individuals with a COVID-19 diagnosis and will only be in operation for 60-days. How are we to know this will not change?

Your constituents expect more and deserve more than to find out about this situation through notifications from neighbors across the street from the Buder Rec Center. I am asking for a written outline of the plan for Buder Rec Center to ensure that our residents stay safe and feel comfortable in our neighborhood and that the individuals being brought to Buder Rec Center are receiving appropriate care. In addition, I would like a single point of contact for neighbors to use if they find any concerns in the coming days.

Finally, GDEA believes a good working relationship with elected officials is important. I invite you to utilize this immediate situation as a starting point for such. A page has been created on our website, <https://www.gatedistricteast.org/buder-rec-updates.html>, to update our residents on Buder Rec Center and I welcome your contributions to be emailed to me at the address below.

Respectfully,  
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