

May 1, 2020

To the Residents and Businesses of the Gate District East Neighborhood:

City officials made the decision to disband the tent encampment located downtown, which will displace many, currently-unhoused individuals. Some established shelters in St. Louis City have already increased their capacity to welcome in some of these additional residents on a temporary basis. The overall outcome, per Mayor Krewson, is to work to provide permanent housing for all affected individuals. As part of the displacement, the GDEA became aware of the City's decision to temporarily convert and use the Buder Park Rec Center as a shelter for approximately thirty residents. Neither neighbors nor the Association were included in any discussions prior to the final decision being made. We understand the concerns, and have communicated them directly to the 6th ward alderwoman, as well as the mayor. We have been assured, by Mayor Krewson, that there will be 24-hour security at the Rec Center, that unhoused individuals will be given health screenings prior to being admitted, and that there will be case workers available. Food will be brought into the center on a daily basis. Residents are encouraged to report any issues and concerns directly to alderwoman Ingrassia ([ingrassiac@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:ingrassiac@stlouis-mo.gov) or 314-622-3287), or to the Mayor's Office ([krewsonl@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:krewsonl@stlouis-mo.gov) or 314-622-3201) if there are specific incidents involving the use of the Buder Rec Center. This is understandably a challenging time for everyone; and even more so for those who need our additional assistance and support.

When learning about this temporary change in use of the Rec Center, several residents who are active in their neighborhood, and who live nearby, reached out to share additional information about inappropriate activities already taking place in the same vicinity. If there are other issues and crimes taking place nearby, all Gate District residents are encouraged to report them to the St. Louis City Police (for emergency situations use 911, and for non-emergent use 231-1212), as well as to Neighborhood Improvement Specialist Dena Hibbard ([hibbardd@stlouis-mo.gov](mailto:hibbardd@stlouis-mo.gov) or 657-1359), and Community Outreach Officer Sherdon Douglas ([sdouglas@slmpd.org](mailto:sdouglas@slmpd.org) or 444-2576). I greatly appreciate everyone's desire to be engaged in the neighborhood, and know that we are all working in this together to make our neighborhood a safe place to live for all residents.

Finally, I have added a page to our website, [www.gatedistricteast.org](http://www.gatedistricteast.org), where you can find any updates we are provided regarding Buder Recreation Center. You can find that page here... <https://www.gatedistricteast.org/buder-rec-updates.html>

Respectfully,

Dan Iadevito  
President | Gate District East Neighborhood