



# City of Stevenson

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To: Stevenson City Council  
From: Leana Johnson, City Administrator  
RE: Homeless Discussion  
Meeting Date: October 19, 2017

## **Executive Summary:**

At the September 21<sup>st</sup> council meeting, the issue regarding the recent homeless person downtown was brought up. At that time council decided to move forward with utilizing the available resources and services to address the matter. On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, the bench where the homeless person was residing, at the corner of Second and Russell, was removed at the request of the property owner. He has since relocated to a bench across the street in front of the courthouse. Staff has received many complaints from citizens and businesses on the issue, which is why it is being brought to council for direction on how to move forward.

**Option 1** – Continue along the same path of offering services and resources that are available in town.

**Option 2** – Install a bar in the middle of the benches downtown to prevent sleeping on the benches (photo attached). The cost of this option is \$200 per bench for 10 benches for a total of \$2,000 out of the park department. It is a solution that does not need to be enforced, with staff time only needed for the initial installation. This will relocate the problem to another area of town, much like removing the bench did, but it will move it away from the downtown core and lessen the impact on the downtown businesses.

**Option 3** – Create an ordinance that prohibits sitting or lying on public sidewalks. This can be restricted to the downtown area, applicable during specific hours and exclude certain activities or special events such as watching a parade. While this will only relocate the problem rather than address it, the problem will be moved away from the downtown core. This will reduce the impact on the downtown businesses.

## **Conclusion/Recommendation:**

The current issue is for a single person that would not respond to offers of assistance. Modifying the benches is the most expensive option and provides a solution that can be implemented without additional enforcement. A combination of option 2 and option 3 would provide tools to use in the future if it becomes a larger issue. Realizing that the weather will prevent the homeless from staying through the winter, direction now will help prepare for the spring.

