

From: [SARAH OWENS](#)
To: [citycouncil](#)
Cc: [Gretchen Bennett](#); [Michael Livingston](#); [Jimmy Jones](#); [Lynelle Wilcox](#); [CityRecorder](#)
Subject: 8 Mar 2021 City Council Mtg - Item 5.b
Date: Friday, March 5, 2021 5:39:47 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

B Continue pursuing a housing-first model by developing additional small transitional housing options (tiny home villages, supervised tent camps, etc.).

Page 15

<https://saalem.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=9222633&GUID=83D5F084-F0A0-4CDE-9EAE-7549326C24A9>

The above statement in the 2021 Strategic Plan Update needs work. Activity 1.B., page 15 of the Update.

- 1) Transitional housing is a housing readiness concept and a term of art that has a specific meaning. A lot's been written about it, but here is one source <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/housing-accommodation-and-supports/transitional-housing>.
- 2) Neither transitional housing, nor tiny homes, nor tent camps, are consistent with the Housing First (should be capitalized) model. <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/>.
- 3) Persons enrolled in a housing program from the streets may require shelter for a few days or weeks, but it is confusing to refer to this as "transitional housing."
- 4) In any event, housing isn't "transitional" if a permanent housing placement isn't realistically available as part of the "transitional" program when stabilization has been achieved.
- 5) Tent camps are not "housing", tiny homes (unplumbed, unheated wooden tents) are not "housing", nor are they best/evidence-based practices.

If the City is going to pursue tiny home villages and supervised tent camps, the Update should just state that, and the Council should cop to the fact that it is pursuing enormously expensive, other than evidence-based practices. At a minimum, the City should not confuse the public with unnecessary and incorrect policy wonk doublespeak. If the City had a homelessness policy, mistakes like this could more easily be avoided.

The City is also engaging in doublespeak by implying that "Homeless Prevention" ("Develop[ing] a long-term, regional strategy to address upstream factors that increase homelessness") will somehow "eliminat[e] homelessness by 2050." Homelessness prevention programs cannot do that. Focusing on "Homeless Prevention" is what Salem has done for 40 years, and it has given the City a chronic homeless population rate that's at least twice the national average.

Sarah Owens
CANDO