

Dear Council Members,

Instead of a vacancy tax, Council should consider a blight tax for landlords who allow encampments, squatters, litter and blight on their properties, which present health and safety issues such as fire, vermin, human waste. In addition, blight in our City Core is damaging to neighboring businesses who are trying to create a welcoming environment for their customers. Attached are photographs of a tent encampment at the back of the Piazza lot on Depot and Brown and garbage.

This is located in the middle of our commercial center.

I would propose a fine of \$1500 per week for illegal squatting on property and \$500 per week for garbage, waste and graffiti to be imposed if the landlord does not rectify the situation within 30 days.

It is unacceptable for absentee landlords to degrade the commercial area and to impact hardworking business owners who need a clean and safe commercial district to survive.

Please see attached photographs taken on Sunday, December 14, 2023.

Thank you,

Kate Haug